

the chronicle

E's behind yow

Pantomime will be using the Black Country twang

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Neat tiger feat

Zoo welcomes a pair of big cats in big operation

Page 5



Great finish

Cycling duo set down marker with gold win

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Proposal to reopen street as main route

PLANS to revamp a run-down area of Dudley town centre have been revealed as part of a multi-million pound regeneration blueprint.

King Street could be reopened as a main commuter route through the town after being converted into a bus lane about five years ago.

The council has started a search for tenants for the empty shops along the road, which stretches across the town alongside the High Street.

The authority has also vowed to refurbish the frontages of the vacant units. It comes as a £550,000 project to refurbish council offices in King Street begins with staff set to move in over the summer.

More than 150 staff from the human resources department will move into Regent House as a number of council offices across the town are shut.

The decision to close part of King Street to traffic proved controversial and led to fears that the area would become abandoned.

Under the new plans the road would be open to all traffic in a bid to attract more people to that part of the town. Council chiefs believe it would also make driving around the town easier and improve access to the centre.

Figures on repossession

MORE than 3,900 families faced losing their homes in the Black Country and Staffordshire last year, latest Government figures reveal.

The highest numbers of people taken to court by mortgage lenders or landlords were in Walsall and Wolverhampton. Figures released by the Ministry for Justice show in Dudley, 405 mortgage and 535 landlord repossession orders were made and in Staffordshire 350 were granted.

YOBS PUT FUTURE OF CHOIR AT RISK

by Andrew Turton

A LADIES choir in Dudley has been forced to search for a new home because of a spate of vandal attacks by yobs. Members of the Ellenvale Singers, many of whom are retired, are looking for new premises after admitting they were unwilling to risk a return to their rehearsal base at the Darby and Joan Club, Lower Gornal, after their cars were attacked.

Council will spend £88m for tenants

ALMOST £90 million will be spent on a revamp of council homes in Dudley including installing energy-efficient heating systems, kitchens and bathrooms over the next five years.

The council has announced a programme of improvements to be carried out at thousands of properties. A total of £88m will go towards work council chiefs say will "make life better" for tenants.

Under the plans around £8m will be spent replacing 750 electric storage heating systems with modern gas heating.

Central heating will also be installed in 600 homes while 800 boilers will be upgraded or replaced.

Workers will also be replacing around 3,500 kitchens or bathrooms in a £12m programme of internal improvements.

It includes replacing more than £4m of windows with modern, energy-efficient double glazed units each year between 2012/13 and 2016/17.

Around £13m will be spent adapting houses for people with disabilities such as installing handrails and ramps.

The council has also allocated around £55m for improvements in empty properties to ensure they can be re-let. A report detailing the work in the council's Dudley Housing Capital Programme has been drawn up and will go before a meeting on Monday.

The group has been performing for 34 years but some members fear they may not be able to continue with the choir if the vandal attacks continue.

Windows of cars parked near the club were smashed while other vehicles had wing mirrors ripped off by youths on February 8. Hundreds of pounds of damage was caused.

Practise sessions at the club have now been cancelled over fears of further attacks.

Around 40 singers are members of the group which has raised more than £100,000 for charity while performing over the decades.

Peter Guest, aged 72, whose wife Freda, 71, is a member of the choir, said the vandalism had happened for several weeks with cars also being scratched.

Frightening

"It is very frightening for them - it is very sad because over 34 years they have raised a considerable amount of money for charity," he said.

"This caused the choir to cancel their normal practice until further notice, until a new venue is found.

"A few members are seriously considering whether they can afford to remain part of the choir if this vandalism continues."

Another member of the choir, who did not want to be named, said: "We do not want to disband - not with the thought that children have forced us to do that."

West Midlands Police said they are investigating the vandalism and would be stepping up patrols.

Spokesman Lee Page said: "We will be meeting with the members of the club to discuss crime prevention and security measures which can be taken and also to reassure them about our ongoing efforts to reduce anti-social behaviour in the area."

Sarah puts her training to the test



Sarah Oakley at the Merry Hill Centre, Dudley, prepares to raise money for Cancer Research by running the London Marathon.

A FIRST-TIME marathon runner from Dudley is preparing to put her training to the test in the hope of helping a charity.

Sarah Oakley, an administration assistant at Dudley Council, first put on her running shoes in June last year.

Now the 37-year-old is gearing up to tackle the London Marathon in aid of Cancer Research UK on April 22.

She needs to raise a minimum of £2,000 for the charity to be able to join the race but is well on the way to meeting the target after raising more than £900 during a collection

at Sainsbury's, Merry Hill. Miss Oakley, who is a member of Stourbridge Running Club, said: "I chose Cancer Research because it's a worthwhile charity which is close to my heart as I have known and worked with people who have had cancer. It's something that affects a lot of people. I want to raise as much money as possible for the charity. I am so grateful to everyone who has donated and for Sainsbury's letting me collect at the store." To sponsor Miss Oakley go to www.runningsponsors.org/sarah-oakley

Residents fear games site could be trouble

RESIDENTS living near a Halesowen park are campaigning against plans for a new multi-use games area amid safety fears.

They claim the site is plagued by anti-social behaviour and are worried about vandals.

Dudley Council wants to install the multi-use games area - known as a Muga - which can be used for a variety of sports at Highfields Park.

People living in nearby Highfield Lane say an existing skateboard area at the site already causes late night noise and nuisance.

Among those objecting is Bronya Webster, who claims teenagers have been seen lighting fires and discarded needles have also been found lying on the ground.

She is worried about the potential increase in the number of people using the park as she says Highfield Lane is already quite congested and fears it could be a safety risk.

Residents also say it is not needed as there is already a Muga and an outdoor gym at Huntingtree Park, which is less than a mile away.

But Belle Vale councillor Bob James said the location of the Muga was "not set in stone" and another site could be found for it, if needed, he said.

Councillor James said police had not received any formal reports of problems.

Delight as cutting back

RESIDENTS say they are delighted after Dudley Council said it would cut grass verges left overgrown for a year as the authority tried to save £30,000.

The council upset families last summer when it stopped cutting grass on all steep banks. But it has now said it will start cutting the verges again in April.

Council transport chief Patrick Harley said the cash would come from extra savings.

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Man may have lain dead for months

A RECLUSIVE former grocer may have lain dead at his Black Country home for months, an inquest heard.

Michael Truby was found by police officers at his address in Mount Road, Halesowen, on December 19.

They were called in by neighbours who were concerned they had not seen the 78-year-old in some time.

Smethwick Coroners Court last

week was told Mr Truby's body was heavily decomposed and a calendar on the wall had not been changed since the end of July.

Letters, some of them dating back to July or August, were found piled up behind the front door when police entered the house.

A bottle of medication, also dated July and believed to be the last Mr Truby collected, was also discovered.

Black Country coroner Robin Balmmain recorded a verdict of death by natural causes – despite the decomposition of the body making it impossible for a clear cause of death to be found.

Mr Balmmain was told a post mortem revealed Mr Truby's heart to be enlarged.

He had diabetes and suffered from cardiac problems.

Pe Peter Harrison told the inquest there were no signs the property had been broken into and nothing visible which would have caused Mr Truby harm.

Mr Truby's cousin Sally Jones said her relation had been eccentric and chose to live as a recluse.

She added Mr Truby had even refused to have a telephone fitted at his home.

Station closures to put more bobbies on beat

Controversial overnight closures of front offices at five Midland police stations will help get more than 25 officers back on the beat, the force's top officer has revealed.

Engineering industry is in need of new blood

THE NEW president of the region's Chamber of Commerce says more engineering graduates are needed to fill a shortfall in the Black Country's manufacturing industry.

Cradley Heath solicitor Paul Bennett, who will take up the post in April, says firms are struggling to replace retiring skilled workers.

He believes more training courses should be made available to teach students these vital skills and believes the creation of University Technical Colleges could be the way forward.

"Talking to our members, they are keen to recruit and invest," said Mr Bennett.

"The challenge is to try to attract people, particularly the significant number of young people that are unemployed, into manufacturing and engineering. "The biggest challenge I think for this area is to ensure we do not skip a generation or a number of generations in terms of their opportunities to work."

Mr Bennett, who is a senior partner at George Green Solicitors and is Dudley chamber president, has been out to visit colleges in the area to see the work they are doing with students.

West Midlands Police's Chief Constable Chris Sims said moves to shut Dudley, Halesowen, Stourbridge, Wednesfield and Bloxwich at night would allow officers to be released from control room duties to the streets.

Front offices of stations are underused and the force needs to develop new ways of communicating, said Mr Sims.

Bloxwich is the only station of the five that will open slightly longer than the others following a public consultation.

Mr Sims said: "We've modified some decisions made in terms of opening hours to fit to the feedback we have had."

"They're not major changes but on a local level people will see them as significant. A big part of the reason for doing this is it allows us to release officers on to patrol more quickly. That will be at least 25 officers. I think it is a reasonable compromise."

Future

"We can say we're not going to go back onto this issue in the future but in the longer term we will be looking at the estate more generally."

"As people's lifestyles change, police stations are not necessarily what people think about. We need think about how we contact people rather than getting completely hooked on the opening times of a building."

Officers on control room duties will be freed for front-line duties when the changes come into effect. Their roles will be filled by front office staff. The force had planned to shut 12 stations between 6pm to 10am each day.

Yow cor beat a bit of panto



Aladdin, who is to be played by 12-year-old Alicia Nelson, with other cast members

ALADDIN and his mates are rubbing their lamp to make sure they put on a bostin' panto – with a Black Country twang.

Hurst Hill Pantomime Players in Hurst Road, Cosely, will be staging the show, written by member Kathryn Williams, at Hurst Hill Methodist Church.

It includes Black Country dialect and references to local places. Twelve-year-old Ali-

cia Nelson is taking on the lead role of Aladdin.

There will be two performances on each of the Saturdays February 25 and March 3 – at 2.30pm and 7.30pm – and just one show at 7.30pm on March 2.

Tickets cost £4.50 for adults and £3.50 for children and are available from Kathryn Williams on 01902 675058.

Museum earns a massive accolade

THE Black Country Living Museum in Dudley has been named one of the most culturally significant sites in the world.

The attraction, in Tipton Road has been recognised by Arts Council England with its prestigious "Designation" accolade, after judges were wowed by the rich history behind the exhibits.

Museum chairman John Hughes said that the lengthy application process had been tough, but worthwhile.

"I am absolutely thrilled we have gained this internationally recognised accolade," he said.

"The award is a fitting tribute to the museum, the Black Country and the many hundreds of people who have campaigned, developed and supported us over the last 40 years."

Chief executive Andrew Lovett added: "This is not just good for the museum, it's good for the whole Black Country."

Councils across the region paid tribute to the museum's importance in attracting visitors from across the country and abroad.

Prize offer for carers

FILLING in a survey about services in Dudley could win 50 young carers a prize.

Organisations working with younger carers want to know what they think of the support available and how it can be improved.

Up to 50 young people who complete the survey will receive vouchers for a trip. The survey is open to carers aged between 13 and 25 at <http://youngcarers.posterous.com/young-carers-13-25-survey>

A £1,500 grant has been put towards the prizes. Call 01384 818723 for a hard copy.

Council on TV

MORE than 100,000 people have tuned in to Dudley Council's television service since the start of the year.

The council's Digi TV Looking Local site is accessible through some satellite and Virgin Media packages. Information on events and services is available.

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Free town parking ruled out

FREE parking has been ruled out as a solution to Dudley's problems by council leader Les Jones.

It comes after the town was named the worst in the country for empty shops - with 29 per cent unused.

Traders have campaigned for years for free parking to attract more customers.

But Councillor Jones said there was "no quick fix" and the authority would not consider abolishing charges at some car parks.

Some 55 new on-street spaces have already been created by getting rid of double yellow lines.

Councillor Jones said: "Free parking is not a panacea and there is no quick fix."

"We feel that short-term on-street free parking is the way forward as car parks cost money to run."

"If you have quality attractions and parking spaces then people will come."

Alan Caswell, who runs the Arcade Toy Shop in the Fountain Arcade, has campaigned for better parking facilities in the town.

He said: "We need to get more people visiting the town - and the way to do that is either free parking or improved facilities."

Cash grant for pastors

A COMMUNITY group has been praised for its work keeping revellers safe on nights out in Stourbridge.

Stourbridge Street Pastors have received a grant of £11,000 to aid their work.

The volunteers go into the town centre mainly on Saturday nights to offer help and advice to those enjoying a night out. Their work has been praised by councillors and police for helping to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Cash is from Dudley's community safety partnership, Safe and Sound, and Dudley Primary Care Trust.

Comedy thrill

A BLACK Country drama group is getting ready to stage their latest production.

The Community Players will perform comedy-thriller Secondary Cause of Death at the Oakfield Centre, Brettle Lane, Brierley Hill, from March 7 to 12. All shows begin at 7.30pm. For tickets at £6 call 01384 394349.

Battling councillor loses fight to cancer



Councillor Margaret Cowell

A COUNCILLOR who carried on serving her local community throughout an eight-year battle with cancer has died.

Margaret Cowell, aged 72, who represented Wollaston and Stourbridge Town on Dudley Council, died at Himley Mill Nursing Home, School Road, Himley. Her daughter, Jackie, and sons, Adrian and Phil, were at her bedside.

Conservative Councillor Mrs Cowell, who was also a stepmother of two and grandmother of three, was diagnosed with breast cancer

soon after winning her seat in 2003.

Despite undergoing radiotherapy and surgery, she carried on working as a councillor and won two more elections.

She discovered, just over a year ago, that the disease had spread to her brain but she battled through her treatment to victory in the May elections - when daughter Jackie, a Labour campaigner, won her first council seat, Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood.

Jackie, aged 41, said: "She never let her illness interfere with the

work she did - it helped to keep her going."

Councillor Cowell, of Park Road West, Wollaston, was born in Kingswinford and used to be an administrator for West Midlands Travel.

Her husband, Doug, died aged 93, soon after she discovered that her cancer had spread to her brain.

Dudley Council leader Les Jones paid tribute to Councillor Cowell. He said: "She was a very well respected and loyal councillor. She will be missed by us as well as the

community she served." Councillor Jones said the start of the borough's doorstep collections of plastics and cardboard for recycling would be a legacy of Councillor Cowell.

She chaired the environmental committee that developed the plans.

Stourbridge MP Margot James said: "Margaret bore her illness with such bravery and dignity and she served the people of Wollaston and Stourbridge town exceptionally well over the years."

The date of her funeral has yet to be arranged.

Speed cameras could be an option at accident blackspot

SPEED cameras could be installed in a bid to improve safety on a road labelled one of the worst accident blackspots in the region. Calls have been made for years for action on Dudley Southern Bypass, which is used by thousands every day.

by Adam Burling

The council is now working with officers from West Midlands Police to see what measures need to be taken to improve the safety of the road.

Data from the West Midlands Casualty Reduction Scheme has revealed in Dudley there were a total of 508 crashes with four fatalities between June 2010 and last May.

The Dudley Southern Bypass, also known as Duncan Edwards Way, ranked as the borough's worst blackspot, with 17 incidents.

The figures also show there have 18 people killed in crashes on routes throughout the Black Country in that time.

Transport chief Councillor Patrick Harley said: "We are aware of people's concerns about the road and we are looking into measures that can be taken if we feel it is appropriate."

"I would stress though that I do not believe this is a dangerous road. The problem is the drivers."

He also insisted there was "no chance" of pedestrian crossings being installed near the Cinder Bank island - despite complaints since highways chiefs ruled out any work being done along the road last year.

Officers say there is too much street furniture in the area already and more could interfere with the visibility of drivers and pedestrians.

Financial

The council has vowed to look at the bypass with a view to any work being done in the next financial year - with detailed research would be carried out first to discover the best approach to any improvements.

A report to councillors says that members of the public had already requested speed equipment be installed along the road with a view to preventing "boy racers" using the bypass.

Sign up to fitness walks

MORE than 100 walkers have signed up to a fitness programme in Halesowen.

Volunteer walk leaders run the popular walking session every Monday morning at the Leasowes. Part of Dudley Council's Walk Fit programme, the free activity enables people to take on exercise in the fresh air. Nordic walking classes also take place at the Leasowes on Mondays at 5.30pm. For information visit www.dudley.gov.uk/walkfit or call Kim Braznell on 01384 816992 or 07799 070089.



Kitchen team leader Russ Warner, front, with back from left, deputy manager Kieran Butterworth and trainee manager Billy Martin at Harvester in Halesowen

Cooking up some new grub

A MASTERCHEF-STYLE panel of children will get to pass judgement on a pub's new menu as part of a drive to get youngsters interested in food and creating their own meals.

The Foxhunt, in Halesowen, is appealing for children who know their carrots from their cucumbers to design their own dishes and meals and possibly become a head chef of the future.

The Harvester pub, which is on the Hagley Road West, is offering six youngsters, who are under the age of 10, the chance to form a panel of judges and decide what sort of dishes will appear on the new menu the pub will then serve.

To be in with a chance of becoming a 'Young Guest Head Chef', bosses want children to design their own dish.

The youngsters can choose from a list of ingredients, ranging from baked beans to broccoli, and explain why it is their perfect meal.

Harvester pub manager Matthew Turner said: "We want to make sure that we reflect exactly what children want, so what better way to do this than by getting the kids involved themselves."

Variety time to help save church

A VARIETY show will help boost funds for a campaign to reopen a landmark St John's church.

The St John's Church Preservation Group is raising money to restore the building in Kates Hill to its former glory.

The show will be at the Quality Hotel, Dudley this Thursday (Feb 23) from 7.30pm. Tickets cost £3 on the door. The church will be the centre of a talk by chairman Deb Brownlee and author Chris Smith at Dudley Library at 2.30pm on February 29.

Aerospace firm goes up for sale

SHARES in Brierley Hill-based Hampson Industries plunged on the stock exchange after news the aerospace group was putting itself up for sale.

The firm employs just a handful of staff at its offices at Waterfront West, with most of its factories now in the US, where it has suffered a string of production problems.

Most recently it has had issues over testing and customer approval of its largest tooling order, delaying deliveries by months.

Local society has just gotta dance

A GROUP will perform songs and dance routines made famous by stage and screen musicals later this month.

Quarry Bank Operatic Society will host the concert, Gotta Dance, Gotta Sing, at the Cornbow Hall, in Hagley Street, Halesowen, from February 29 to March 3. The shows will feature songs from The Lion King and Ghost.

Male choir will perform concert

A BLACK Country male voice choir will give a concert on February 25.

The Gentlemen Songsters, from Kingswinford, will perform at The Methodist Centre, Dudley Port Church, Tividale Street, Tipton at 7.30pm.

Tickets cost £6 and are available on the door or online at methodistcscen.tredp@yahoo.co.uk

Plea to relatives

OFFICIALS trying to find relatives of Mrs Sandra Palmer, aged 65, who died at her home in Queensway, Wollescote, on February 3 have asked them to call 0845 3527481.

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"TEMPTERS rise to 11" (television subtitle on a weather forecast). And more dodgy subtitles, this time from a financial programme: "You've got to have the right monkey-making attitude."

□□□□□□□□

SCIENTISTS have confirmed, using tiny tracking devices, that a tiny songbird, the northern wheatear, migrates from the Arctic to Africa and back, a distance of up to 18,000 miles.

And here's another fascinating fact about the wheat ear. What does the name mean?

The answer is absolutely nothing. It is a cleaned-up version of its ancient name and if you see a flash of white as the wheat ear flies away, all is understood. Our ancestors called it the white arse.

And don't even ask about the cuckoo pint.

□□□□□□□□

STAFFORDSHIRE Fire and Rescue Service already has more than the average quota of women firefighters but is seeking more. Why?

This is how a Welsh woman firefighter put it in an earlier recruitment campaign: "The reason we want to get women firefighters in is to challenge the stereotypical images of firefighters being big and butch and white and male." The bad news? Your house has just caught fire. The good news? The stereotypical firefighters are rushing to the scene.

□□□□□□□□

MAIL-order anacondas. Do they come from Amazon?

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A FRIEND of mine is a qualified counsellor in the process of setting up a website to promote her caring, nurturing, empathising and endlessly patient services. She was irritated to discover that pullyourselftogether.com has already been taken.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Home campaigners to meet inquiry officials

CAMPAIGNERS have been granted face-to-face meetings with officials leading a consultation into the future of a closure-threatened care home in Kingswinford.

They demanded talks with charity Age UK Dudley which has been tasked with investigating the possibilities regarding New Bradley Hall.

Dudley Council had earmarked the home for closure, but called for a rethink over the decision and launched a consultation. Five meetings will be held in March and will form part of the 12-week consultation.

Charity chief officer Sally Huband said issues raised during the focus groups will contribute to findings.

"Age UK Dudley is committed to ensuring the widest possible opportunities are offered to residents, families, friends, other stakeholders and members of the public to contribute to this consultation," she said.

The first opportunity will be on March 7 at Age UK Sedgley's base, Ettymore Road, between 2.30pm and 4.30pm. On March 8 at The Savoy Centre, Northfield Road, Netherton from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

Age UK Dudley's Merry Hill centre will host events on March 10 from 10.30am to 12.30pm and March 12 between 6.30pm and 8.30pm. The final event will be at Kingswinford Community Centre, Kingswinford high street, on March 19 from 6.30pm to 8.30pm.

The driver did everything she could in the circumstances."

Death an accident

AN 80-YEAR-OLD woman died of multiple injuries after stepping into the path of a car, an inquest was told.

Thelma Burley was thrown into the air and landed on the bonnet of the vehicle on Norton Road, Stourbridge, at around 5pm on December 15 last year.

Police experts told the inquest at Smethwick Coroners Court the car, a Volkswagen, had been travelling at 25mph at the time.

They said all the evidence indicated Mrs Burley, who lived in Norton Road, had failed to see the vehicle or misjudged its distance, and had suddenly stepped out into the road. A verdict of accidental death was recorded.

Senior collision investigator for West Midlands Police Sgt Richard Breeze, said: "This appears to be a case of pedestrian error. The driver did everything she could in the circumstances."

Coming clean for fashion show



Weronika Bucior and Naomi Andrews model the colourful creations for the show

DUSTERS and mop heads may not sound like they belong on the catwalk – but students at Dudley College are proving there is more to style than designer labels.

Fashion students from the college are showing off their creative flair at a show today by using household items to make clothes. They were putting the finishing

touches to designs ready for the showcase.

Weronika Bucior and Naomi Andrews will model the creations made from more than 100 yellow dusters. Designers Shaun Harris who won last year's outstanding achievers award and Jen Devereux spent hours creating the designs. Mopheads were used for the shoulders of Naomi's dress.

Tentative welcome on council tax freeze

A FREEZE on council tax for Dudley residents has been broadly welcomed by the borough's MPs.

But they warn tough financial constraints will continue. They said the move would help people suffering during the current economic downturn.

Dudley Council's cabinet has approved plans to accept a one-off £2.8million Government grant allowing the authority to freeze council tax for 12 months.

However, the authority has revealed it will raise tax in future years to cover costs. Dudley North MP Ian Austin said most people would welcome this but other tough decisions should be taken to ease the burden on taxpayers.

Dudley South MP Chris Kelly said: "I think it is entirely right that local and central government should be working together."

Margot James, MP for Stourbridge, said: "It was absolutely right for the council to take advantage of a grant."

First aid classes

FIRST aid skills to be used on children and babies will be taught in Halesowen.

Stourbridge and Halesowen National Childbirth Trust will hold sessions at Lutley Community Centre, Brookwillow Road, February 25 and March 31 from 9.45-11.45am. Call 07980928341

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MP hits at cutbacks for police

AN MP who led a campaign to stop the opening hours of Dudley Police Station being reduced has hit out at cuts to police funding after the controversial plans were approved.

More than 2,500 residents and businesses backed a petition drawn up by Dudley North MP Ian Austin.

But despite public outcry, the plans which will see the opening hours of 7am to 10pm change to 10am to 6pm, have been approved by West Midlands Police.

The move is part of the battle by West Midlands Police to save £126 million over the next four years.

It includes the loss of more than 2,250 police officers and staff posts.

But Mr Austin said cuts to police funding had gone "too far".

Last month Mr Austin invited Assistant Chief Constable Sharon Rowe to visit Dudley and meet councillors and traders.

Speaking at the time, Mr Austin said: "It feels like the town is moving backwards rather than forwards."

"It gives the impression Dudley is not worth looking after," added Mr Austin.

Fitness classes

A WIDE range of fitness classes are on offer at Halesowen Leisure Centre.

New activities at the centre include bodycombat on Tuesdays from 10am to 11am, spinning on Tuesdays at 7pm to 8pm and circuits on Sunday from 9 to 9.45am.

That's neat that tiger feat as zoo drops in two big cats

HISTORY was made at Dudley Zoo with the arrival of two female tigers in an operation that has taken almost a year of planning. It is the first time more than one big cat has been kept in an enclosure at the zoo in its 75-year history. The two tigers were carefully craned into their new home.

Jobs will be transferred as Helix sold

LYE SCHOOL and office equipment supplier Helix has been sold as a going concern to international stationery firm Mapped SA.

The sale to the French-based group was for an undisclosed sum. Helix, in Engine Lane, went into administration last month. The company employs 38 people in the town and all will transfer to the firm's new owners.

Administrator Paul Addison of Grant Thornton said: "We are very pleased to have been able to secure the future of the Helix business."

"Helix and Oxford are well-known brands, which attracted substantial interest from many UK and overseas companies. As a competitor to Helix, Mapped's strategic purchase of the business makes a great deal of sense, now allowing them to significantly invest in the brands and grow the business both in the UK domestic market and internationally."

"We are also delighted that the employees based at Helix's head office in Lye will transfer to the company's new owners." The rulers, protractors and pencil cases made in the heart of the Black Country were a part of generations of British children's school day.

The animals were transported into the big cat enclosure in a manoeuvre involving more than a dozen senior staff.

Fifteen-month-old Amur tiger Tschuna and fourteen-month-old Daseep, a Sumatran, were transferred from Wuppertal Zoo, in Germany.

Staff in Dudley spent the last 11 months planning how to lower the cats into the enclosure in meetings with workers from the German zoo.

The operation took just over two hours to complete by which time the tigers were settling into their new home in one of the site's historic Tecton buildings.

They were lifted into the enclosure using a large crane and two cranes. Staff said it was a complex process as the crane had to be moved very slowly to avoid distressing the animals.

Detailed

Zoo chief executive Peter Suddock said: "We are just over the moon with the new girls, they are beautiful."

Mr Suddock said: "It is wonderful to see them in there, and hopefully, within the next year we will have a Sumatran male to carry on our breeding programme."

"We are just delighted to have such an important and rare species back at the zoo." The zoo hopes to get a male tiger later this year.

Mr Suddock added: "It is the first time in 75 years since the zoo opened to the public that we have moved more than one big cat at the same time into this enclosure."

The tigers will remain quarantined within their Tecton enclosure for six months.



Tschuna takes a tentative step into her new home at Dudley zoo



Daseep makes herself at home in the enclosure



Daseep is moved out of the transporter ready to be craned in

NEWS in brief

Views sought on theatre changes

PEOPLE are being asked to give their views on suggested improvements aimed at making it easier for visitors to get around a theatre room at Halesowen Library.

Dudley Council is proposing to make a slight reduction to the size of the stage in the library's Shenstone Theatre.

Bosses say it will provide more space for visitors and to accommodate people with disabilities.

The Shenstone Theatre is available to hire and the council is consulting on the proposals with groups who use it.

Work to start on council housing

CONSTRUCTION work is due to start on a £2.6 million council home development in the heart of the Black Country.

Developer Lovell is building 24 houses in Orchard Street, Brierley Hill, to replace a row of outdated properties.

They will be added to the council's housing stock and include two, three and four bedroom houses and two bedroom bungalows. Work is due to be finished by November.

Walk for charity

A SPONSORED walk has been organised by the Rainbow Breast Reconstruction group and will be held at Bodenhall Arboretum, Wolverley, on April 10.

Call the group on 01384 231232 or 01384 393077.

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thechronicle

School faces second bill as thieves strike again

A DUDLEY school which had already been landed with a £140,000 bill by metal thieves now faces having to fork out another £10,000 after its roof was attacked yet again.

Raiders who climbed on to the roof of Jessons CE Primary left a trail of destruction, ripping off tiles in a desperate search for lead.

But there was no lead left to steal – because repeated attacks over the last two years led to the school having to carry out £140,000 of repairs.

At the same time, the school decided to replace all the lead with a non-metallic sealant to deter future thieves.

"We thought we'd finally got rid of the problem," said headteacher Lucy Griffiths.

Ripped

"But now they've come back and ripped up every single roof joint and ripped off tiles. You'd have thought that, after not finding lead in the first few, they'd have left – but they just carried on. It is soul destroying."

The latest attack was discovered after a contractor working on another roof nearby spotted the destruction in School Street.

"It's all the more annoying because we haven't got any lead on the roof any more. We had it all replaced in the summer because of previous lead thefts," added Mrs Griffiths, who has been head of the school for 19 years.

"We didn't think about an attempt to steal lead from the roof because we haven't got any left and thought we wouldn't have that problem any more. It's more money we would much rather spend on our pupils."

Group in administration

AN ENGINEERING and shopfitting group based in Belbroughton, near Stourbridge, has gone into administration.

David Bennett and David Dunckley of Grant Thornton have been appointed joint administrators of Estrella Group, of Mill Pool, Nash lane. Estrella was founded in 2004.



Headteacher Lucy Griffiths on the roof where the damage was caused

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Fire chairman hits out at station campaigners

Venue hitting right note



Pub owner Tony Finch, left, with friends Mark Reid, right, Jack Daniels

A NEW live music venue in Dudley has been striking the right chord with music fans.

The Spareroom at the Saracen's Head pub in Stone Street has welcomed a host of musicians and bands from across the country since it opened 10 weeks ago.

Next up will be Scottish band The Law of the Chord on March 7 followed by Wolverhampton-based Fly by Nature and Cardiff group Clione on March 9. Junk Monkey will be on stage on March 30. Owner Tony

Finch said he wanted to provide a venue where new bands from the borough and further afield could perform.

"The aim of the Spareroom is to give a platform for new musicians and bands. There are not many places in Dudley offering this chance. It's going very well so far."

During the day the venue, which is open until 3am, serves food. Bands interested in performing should visit: www.spare roomars.co.uk for more details.

THE West Midlands Fire Authority chairman has hit out at campaigners behind a legal bid to save Halesowen Fire Station.

Controversial plans to shut the station and axe one of two 24-hour crews serving the area were approved by the authority in November last year.

But a legal fight to overturn the closure and fire crew plans has now been kick-started with campaigners raising £10,000 in an attempt to have a judicial review held into the decision.

Halesowen Fire Station, in Hagley Road, is set to close on March 31 with a new station built at an as-yet undecided location.

Unnecessary

But Sandwell Councillor John Edwards, chairman of the fire authority, says a judicial review could cause a delay to proposals for the replacement covering Halesowen and Cradley Heath.

Two consultation events will be held in March when artist impressions of the new base will go on display.

But Councillor Edwards said if the review went ahead it could: "cause unnecessary delay and expense which would be bad news for everyone".

He added: "We are keen to move as quickly as possible to provide a brand new community fire station to cover people in the Halesowen and Cradley Heath areas."

"I also want to provide certainty for our firefighters and station staff."

Help with using internet

TWO technology champions have been recruited for a library in Stourbridge to help people get to grips with the internet.

Volunteers Mike Stout and John Price are on hand to support visitors to Hagley Library. They aim to help people learn how the internet could help them save time, money and hassle in everyday life. Log on to www.worcestershire.gov.uk or call 01905 822722.

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A COMMUNITY group has been praised for its work keeping revellers safe on nights out in Stourbridge.

Stourbridge Street Pastors have received a grant of £11,000 to aid their work.

The volunteers go into the town centre mainly on Saturday nights to offer help and advice to those enjoying a night out. Their work has been praised by councillors and police for helping to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Cash is from Dudley's community safety partnership, Safe and Sound, and Dudley Primary Care Trust.

M5 crash driver could have fallen asleep at the wheel**A LORRY driver whose vehicle hit a bridge on the M5 near Halesowen may have fallen asleep at the wheel, an inquest heard.**

Peter Morrison, aged 59, from Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, died in the smash on the northbound carriageway. His Volvo lorry mounted a crash barrier and hit the Carters Lane bridge before bursting into flames. The motorway was shut for hours following the accident at junction three on July 26.

The damage resulted in weeks of repair works to the bridge. Black

Country coroner Robin Balmain said: "It seems quite clear there are two possibilities - he fell asleep or he had a medical emergency. But we will never know."

Mr Balmain gave a verdict of death as a result of a road traffic collision at the hearing in Smethwick.

Giving evidence, Mr Morrison's partner Janet Davies said he was an experienced driver and had taken a post with a driving agency three weeks before the crash.

She said he had been due to drive to Scotland on a job on July 25 and would usually have slept for "an hour or two"

before going on a late-night trip. But the job was cancelled and he had instead spent the day doing other things and had not gone to bed.

Mrs Davies said her partner received a call on July 25 asking if he could drive to the West Midlands. He set out at around 7pm and phoned her at 11.40pm saying he would be home by 5am. Pc Nigel Power, of the forensic collision investigation unit at West Midlands Police, said CCTV showed the lorry being driven normally about four miles from the crash site. Mr Morrison had been travelling at about 53mph, according to a tracking device.

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And it is our politicians who are clearly to blame.

Our country I think it may be too late to save,

And no doubt our soldier heroes are turning in their grave.

MICHAEL F SAMPSON

Kingswinford, Dudley

No point in becoming Dudley city

I FOR one am not in favour of Dudley becoming a city.

Living in Coseley, which came under the jurisdiction of the Dudley Metropolitan Borough in 1966 with the boundary changes, if anything we ought to revert back to the urban district councils.

At least they looked after the community, and its welfare, which is more than can be said for coming under the DMBC.

We had our own police station, fire station, refuse bins emptied twice a week, road and drain cleaning on a regular basis, and with the foresight of that Coseley Urban District Council we

had our own swimming pool. Now what have we got?

No police station, no fire station, no swimming pool, refuse bags emptied once a week.

Rarely do we see the roads or drains cleaned, except in November when the roads are cleaned just before the Remembrance Day Parade.

Now Dudley Council wants to spend millions on revamping the market place. What the hell for?

They spent more than £1m on Stone Street Square not far away from the market place – and what use has it served? There was £1m on the Council

Plus building and now I believe plans are in the pipeline for it to be on the move again.

We mustn't forget all the vast amount of money that has been spent on a leisure centre in south of the borough, just recently a sum of £474,000. And the best part is, it's still got an uneven floor. How much money does it need to get the floor even?

No! I am not in favour of Dudley becoming a city. To me there are far more important things to deal with.

MRS P A JORDAN
Peartree Lane
Coseley

Apply the law to the owners of cruise ship

IT SEEMS sailing too close to the shoreline in an unauthorised, unscheduled and unplanned manoeuvre was not unusual in the case of a particular Italian ship.

In fact, footage has been shown in reports of it doing just that on previous occasions.

That being the case, it must follow that the cruise company and owners must have been aware through their "black box" data recordings that it was happening and took no steps, until now of course.

Therefore, on the basis that maritime law was being broken and knowingly so, the company should also be held to account in a court of law along side the unfortunate but irresponsible captain.

DANIEL W GILL
Redditch
Worcestershire

LETTERS

to the Editor

POST

Halesowen Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial, 51-53
Queen Street, Wolverhampton
WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

E-MAIL

dudleychrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

NHS care will suffer if changes go ahead

IF MR Cameron has his way, under proposed changes to the NHS, hospitals such as Russells Hall, will be allowed to earn up nearly 50 percent of their income from private patients.

In reality this means that cash strapped hospitals entering the market place, will compete with each other for private patients. The number of NHS beds will be reduced, as hospitals search for profit. Pandering to the incentive of "going private" will involve the opportunity to jump NHS waiting lists. Those hospitals unable to raise sufficient revenue would face closure.

Already, Russells Hall is in crisis situation over a reduced capacity in maternity beds. Prospective mothers have been booked to have their babies in other hospitals.

A spokesperson for Russells Hall, has said the feasibility of increasing capacity is being looked into. If the study does lead to an increase in beds and Mr Cameron's plans are allowed to become law, the increased capacity may well be over run by newly privatised sector patients.

EDWARD DAVIES,
Stourbridge, Dudley

It's little wonder UK has few jobs

DURING my years as a sales representative, (1965 - 1981) I developed a "theory". The so-called Queen's Award to Industry for Exports was detrimental, as well as an incentive. Life since then has proved me right.

During my career, one of my customers was Courtaulds Engineering. One of their main lines was textile making machinery, which was sold all over the world, for which they earned the Queen's Award. So called "under-developed countries" purchased this machinery and started making materials, which were then sold back to the UK.

At a meeting in London one of the speakers was an MP, who said "we are actively encouraging industry to leave the UK".

PETER COLE
Kingswinford

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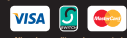
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NHS shake-up could see closure of headquarters

NHS headquarters in Dudley and Walsall could close with staff moved to other parts of the Black Country under a shake-up of services.

Hundreds of staff would be moved to bases in Sandwell and Wolverhampton as part of the re-organisation of primary care trusts in the region.

St John's House, which is the main offices for NHS Dudley in Union Street, and NHS Walsall's headquarters Jubilee House, Bloxwich Lane, could fully or partly shut, affecting 550 positions.

The jobs would be relocated to Sandwell Primary Care Trust's Kingston House headquarters, West Bromwich High Street and Wolverhampton City PCT's base, Coniston House, Chapel Ash.

Structure

All four primary care trusts were brought under a single senior management structure called the Black Country Cluster last April. Health service bosses said lower numbers of staff have been occupying all four buildings due to changes being introduced as the proposed NHS reforms gather pace.

They said that in some cases staff are now working across a number of locations - leading to a review of the office space currently used. Black Country Cluster chief executive Rob Bacon said the body was carrying out a comprehensive review before changes expected in April 2013.

"No final decision has been taken and further detailed work still needs to be carried out," he said.

Cat charity needs help

CAT lovers are being asked to volunteer their time to help a charity raise funds and rehoming unwanted and abandoned moggies.

The Stourbridge and District branch of Cats Protection says it needs new people to help out in a number of positions. These include running fundraising stands, helping out at its charity shop in Stourbridge and visiting the homes of prospective new owners.

Turn the screw on thefts



Stourbridge sector Pcsos Jamie Fisher and colleague Pcsos Nick Woods with Ben Morgan and Joerg Beckert, both from Halfords in Wordsley

FREE tamper-proof screws to help stop numberplates being stolen are on offer in the borough.

Sessions are being run by police and Halfords Auto Centre around Dudley. It is part of a crackdown on fuel and numberplate theft called Operation Kadence. Sgt Mick Wennen said: "We have seen a sharp rise over the past year or so in the number of thefts of vehicle registra-

tion plates, which is believed to be linked to various crimes."

Residents and businesses can collect screws from Aldi in Halesowen on February 25 from 11am until 1pm, and Sainsbury's in Ambleside on February 28 from 10am until 2pm. Sgt Rich Narrowmore, from Dudley, said: "We're really delighted Halfords is supporting our campaign."

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Social group committee members and company managers in 1977



Stourbridge garage staff on a fishing trip in 1982



The last stop... staff on the day Stourbridge garage closed in 1985



End of the road... buses taken out of service in 1980



Bryan Bush with his scrapbooks of memories

Former bus driver stops to remember his routes

A £7 MILLION scheme that has changed Stourbridge Bus Station beyond recognition has rekindled memories of the old site for one long-time worker.

Bryan Bush started out as a driver in 1962 and worked there and its neighbouring garage until 1985.

The 73-year-old, of Maypole Drive, Stourbridge, says while nothing now remains of either the original station or garage he still has fond memories of both and the people who worked there.

Redevelopment of the Foster Street East site will create a bus interchange with a new concourse and subway link but Mr Bush says things had been very different when he started working there.

The station had been split in two with the old railway station, which was then the main line, at the centre of the site. But the big difference was that opposite the station stood a garage where the buses were stored and maintained. The vehi-



by Lee Watton

cles also used to leave this site to begin their daily journeys.

That is now occupied by the Mercedes Benz dealership but at one time it was one of the biggest employers in the town with around 200 staff working there.

Mr Bush later became an acting inspector and then a union chairman and finally a liaison officer.

"The garage was a bustle of activity in those days as buses continually left and entered the site while on their journeys," he says.

"We had vehicles going out to all areas such as Worcester, Ludlow and Kidderminster along with the closer destinations such as Cradley Heath and outlying parts of Stourbridge."

"I worked there until 1985 when the garage was finally closed. It was a shame as it was a great place to

work and at the time a lot of people were employed there."

Mr Bush says staff were a close knit team and went on social events, including fishing trips.

The garage was demolished soon after its closure on January 26, 1985, marking the end of an era.

Staff gathered for one last photograph of their final day before they were transferred to depots in Hartshill, Dudley and Quinton as part of West Midlands Travel's rationalisation plans. But Mr Bush says many keep in touch and meet for regular reunions.

The replacement, built to bring the split station together, cost £147,000, was demolished last year.

"The recent work at the site is the second major change I can remember happening at the station," says Mr Bush, who worked on the buses for nearly 40 years.

"However, I am sure there will be people who continue to think fondly of the old station and before that the garage."



Staff pull a retiring driver's bus into Stourbridge garage in 1978

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Chance for women to get on their bikes

A WOMEN-ONLY bike ride has been organised in Dudley on Friday and aims to help cyclists improve their confidence.

Women will be taken on a traffic-free route from the pavilion at Priory Park at 10.30am. It has been set up by Breeze which is encouraging more women to take up cycling following research by Sport England, which said three times more men get on a bike for fun than women.

The Breeze network aims to close this gap by offering advice and support to help women overcome some of the barriers which stop them from getting on a bike.

Couple collect the cash



Devoted couple Barry and Brenda Pincher

DEVOTED couple Barry and Brenda Pincher proved they have hearts of gold by raising thousands for charity to mark their 50th wedding anniversary.

The cash collected at a party held in their honour at Tipton Sports Academy will be donated to Compton Hospice. The happy couple, who first met at a dance hall when they were teenagers, were joined by more than 100 of their friends and family and raised £653 for the charity.

Mr and Mrs Pincher have three children – Dawn Hyde, aged 49, Paul, aged 45 and Linda Elwell, aged 41 – as well as nine grandchildren.

Mr Pincher, aged 70, said it was love at first sight when their eyes met across the crowded dance floor.

"The dance hall was above Burton's clothing shop in Darlaston. She was 14 and I was 17. We hit it off straight away," he said.

They were married within three years, tying the knot at Wednesbury Register Office on and they then moved in with Mrs Pincher's parents in Powis Avenue, Tipton, for six years before moving to Bourne Avenue 44 years ago.

Mr Pincher worked as a welder all his life, at John Thompson's, Ettingshall, Wolverhampton, while Mrs Pincher worked as a sewing machinist at Clifford Williams clothing store in Smethwick for two years before becoming a full-time housewife.

The couple suffered a blow four years ago when Mr Pincher's his legs were amputated due to vascular disease. But Mr Pincher said the experience has brought him and his wife, now aged 67, even closer together.

Railway display on track

A POPULAR photography exhibition aimed at steam train enthusiasts will return to a Midlands venue later in the year.

Kidderminster Railway Museum will stage the photograph fair at its headquarters, off Comberton Hill, on Easter Monday, April 9, from 10am until 4.30pm.

Collectors will bring in selections of photographs and the museum will also display a selection from its own archive of more than 140,000 images.

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Asda is accused of bully boy tactics in plans row

ASDA has been accused of trying to "blow apart" the democratic process by launching a planning appeal even before councillors had made a decision on a proposed store in Kidderminster.

There are also concerns the proposal by Asda to develop a site in the town could cause major traffic delays.

Wyre Forest District Council's planning committee last week decided it was "minded" to follow its officers recommendation to refuse Asda's proposal for Churchfields, on the edge of Kidderminster town centre.

But, technically, the authority could not refuse the plans because Asda has already lodged an appeal to planning inspectors in Bristol, claiming the council was taking too long in its decision.

Planning officers say they do not think Asda gave enough thought to locating the store, which would create 370 jobs, in the Eastern Gateway area, possibly on the site of the Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre.

They also agreed the plan, which would cover part of the former Tomkinson's carpet factory and would include a new dual carriageway from the A456 to Churchfields, should be refused.

Councillor Mrs Fran Oborski said she had been "horrified" when she heard Asda had appealed before the committee even reached its decision.

"For this US-owned store to come and blow apart the democratic process - saying they don't care about our master plan for Churchfields or the Eastern Gateway - is bully boy tactics," she added.

An app way to services

WORCESTERSHIRE County Council has launched a free android app allowing residents to access to council services from their mobile phone. The app allows reporting of issues such as potholes directly to the authority and find out information on schools and waste management.

How to meet a cheetah



Rosie Wilkes, aged 24, feeds the cheetahs at the West Midland Safari Park with help from Dave Higgins

A WEST Midland Safari Park worker has been getting close to a group of cheetahs for her new role of taking guests on tours around the site.

Rosie Wilkes, aged 24, started her training at the attraction last week and her first task was learning how to feed the park's cheetahs.

Animal-lover Rosie, who has worked at the park for two years, said it had been an "exhilarating experience" and was looking forward to working with the animals full-time. As part of her new role, she will take guests on VIP

tours, a scheme which allows people to go behind the scenes and try their hand at looking after the animals.

She will show people how to feed the cheetahs and the giraffes and how to look after the attraction's collection of Asian rhinos.

Rosie, from Kinver, will continue her training under the watchful eye of veteran guide Dave Higgins.

She said: "I have just started my training and I am really enjoying it."

Officials said the VIP tours were a success and they had needed another member of staff to meet the demand.



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Warning on virus scam

POLICE are warning people to beware of internet fraudsters who offer to fix a bogus computer virus.

A recent spate of complaints has been received by the West Mercia force, which covers the Wyre Forest district, about phone calls received out of the blue from companies warning that someone's computer has a virus and they need to access their system to fix it.

"If you get a call like this, just hang up immediately," says Ed Roberts from West Mercia Police's hi-tech crime unit. "Don't let them have remote access to your computer and under no circumstances should you give them any money."

Relatives search

OFFICIALS trying to find relatives of Mrs Sandra Palmer, aged 65, who died at her home in Queens-way, Wollscote, on February 3 have asked them to call 0845 3527481.

Bird's eye view of station



The new bus station in Stourbridge town centre, which should be operational this spring

UNTIL now it's just been a tantalising view from Stourbridge's ring road.

But this bird's eye view shows more detail of the layout of the town's futuristic-looking new bus station, which transport chiefs from Centro hope will be up and running this spring.

The photograph shows the outline of the boat-shaped, glass domed main station building, etched in a light blue outline, which will house six buses.

It dwarfs a smaller, similar steel frame, glazed structure - described as the "Finger Island" - a few yards away, which will provide an additional waiting area and stands for two buses, together with passenger information screens.

A further bus stand will be housed under an "umbrella shaped" structure in Vauxhall Road, Stourbridge ring road and the tip of the town centre shopping area is in the bottom right.

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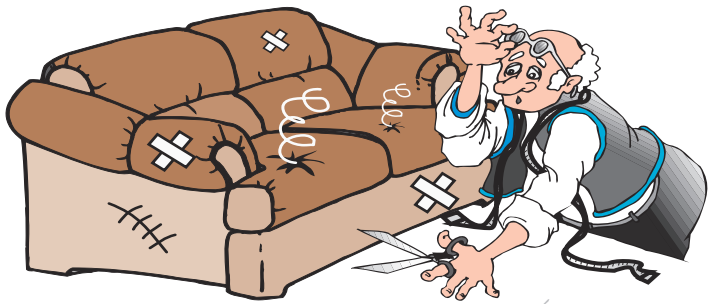
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thechronicle

Just a minute, you can't post that sort of time

A COUNCIL-RUN outdoor gym in the Black Country has set a tough target for couch potatoes – just to get there.

The equipment in Mary Stevens Park in Stourbridge encourages people to take more physical exercise.

But for some the workout starts before they even reach the park due to signs which underestimate the time it takes to arrive.

Six cast-iron signposts have been erected in the surrounding areas. But the sign at one park entrance says the fitness centre is just a one-minute walk away.

In fact, it would take an averagely-fit person almost three minutes to reach it.

Known as the "healthy hub", it is one of five launched by Dudley Council with the aim of increasing fitness among residents as part of the government's Healthy Towns initiative.

Junction

One signpost in Love Lane, close to the junction with Corser Street – indicates the "healthy hub" is just a one minute stroll across the park.

But Linda Powell, aged 55, of nearby Oakleigh Road, said: "When I first saw the sign, I thought it didn't seem possible to walk it in a minute – so I timed it."

"I made a brisk descent of a flight of steps, and then a steep grassy bank and it took me 2mins 48 secs to reach the hub."

Councillor David Stanley, Dudley Council's, said: the times were based on an average pace. The signposts are an eye-catching and informative way of encouraging more walking.

Friendly football match

POLICE have organised a friendly football match against teenagers in a Black Country community.

The game between officers from Stourbridge and Brierley Hill and Dudley Youth Club will be held at Brierley Hill's Dell Stadium on February 26. It has been organised to help improve relations between officers and youngsters in the area.



Linda Powell outside Mary Stevens Park with the information sign

Elizabeth Perry

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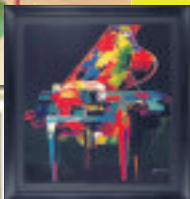
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Park visitors flocking to use free pub parking

Self defence courses



Leisure attendant Tasha Jackson and instructor Jason Charlesworth get ready for a self defence course at Haden Hill Leisure Centre.

A NEW six week course on self defence is open to anyone in Cradley Heath.

Haden Hill Leisure Centre is hosting the course, which is designed to make participants aware of potential dangers and how to deal effectively with them.

It starts on February 25 and will continue once a week at 10.30-11.30am.

Matt Hill, physical activity devel-

opment officer at the centre, said: "The course is aimed at anyone wanting to raise their awareness of potential dangers or difficult situations and learn effective non-aggressive attack forms to deal with them."

For all six sessions the course costs £24 for non members and £18 for all leisure pass members.

For more information call Haden Hill Leisure Centre on 0845 659 4815.

A PUB landlord who opened up his car park to visitors to a nearby beauty spot after a parking fee hike says he has been "inundated".

John Coombes, who runs the Summerhouse pub, says visitors are boycotting the car park at Baggeridge Country Park, near Sedgley, following a recent rise in charges.

Many are now opting to leave their cars at the pub, in Gospel End, after Mr Coombes agreed to let country park visitors park there for free over the winter months.

He said he hoped the response would convince South Staffordshire Council to reconsider the charges and reduce them before the summer months. He said charities regularly using the country park for events had also approached him asking if they, too, could use his car park.

Fuming

Regular users of the country park were left fuming after the authority increased a day's parking at Baggeridge from £1.40 to £2.50. An hour's parking rate has also been introduced at £1.50.

Mr Coombes said: "The response to the pub allowing its car park to be used has been incredible with many visitors choosing to park here instead of at Baggeridge," he said. Mr Coombes said people did not have to visit the pub to use the car park but admitted there had been a rise in trade.

But South Staffordshire Council said visitors were still using the car park.

Spokesman Jamie Angus said: "The park is as popular as ever and we have seen a rise in people taking up our offer on season passes."

Travel firm on the move

A TRAVEL agents have opened a new base in Stourbridge's Ryemarket Shopping Centre. Thomas Cook moved out of its former home, the Crown Centre, in November ahead of a £50 million redevelopment project. Staff were relocated to the Merry Hill branch while new premises were found in the town. The new shop was opened by the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Michael Evans

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thechronicle

Help on cards for hospice

Perton Jubilee Townswomen's Guild

IN January our New Year programme began with an evening of wine and nibbles, followed by a game of play your cards right.

This was won by Norma and Gwen. We donated £25 to Acorn Hospice, raised by our members making donations instead of giving each other Christmas cards.

At our February meeting we were entertained by Will Morgan, a local folk singer. Following this with refreshments, we certainly went home with a smile on our face.

The AGM will be held in March followed by a cheese and wine evening. We meet at Perton civic centre on Perton estate next to Sainsbury's on the first Wednesday evening of each month from 7.30-9.30pm.

Cameo Ladies

CHAIRMAN Jane Emery welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2012.

This began with the AGM followed by presentation of a cheque for £500 to Georgina and Rachael from the Wolverhampton Branch of the Samaritans, the chosen charity for 2011.

A talk was then given on the work of a Samaritan. This was followed with music and singing by members Pamela, Janice and Chris.

Our next meeting will be History of the Royal Hospital" with Roy Stallard on March 5 at 7.45pm at The Mercure Goldthorn Hotel, Wolverhampton. Details on 01902 330727/844836.

Doug Smith, President of Cannock Lions with Eileen Cryer, President, SI Cannock & District

Lions club checks in with aid for project

Cannock Soroptimists

CANNOCK Soroptimists were thrilled to accept a cheque for £50 from Cannock Lions as a contribution to help fund their project on trafficking, Purple Teardrop.

President Eileen Cryer and the Club's Programme Action group leading this project were particularly pleased as another taxi firm had just agreed to become involved and the club needed to provide stickers and leaflets with the information about trafficking for a further 30 taxis in the area.

Taxis are especially important in the project as it may happen that as a direct result of them carrying the Purple Teardrop information, a woman will be alerted to the dangers of trafficking and she can then get help. Equally it may happen that a customer, perhaps troubled by something they have seen, spots the trafficking information together with the Crime Stoppers Number 0800 555 111 and is able to report it. This could result in the conviction of traffickers.

Doug Smith, President of Cannock Lions said: "We are proud to be part of such a practical initiative".

CLUB NEWS

Support is a feather in RSPB cap

Yoxall WI

DID you know that the RSPB was originally called the plume and feather club?

It was set up to discourage the use of feathers in hats that was resulting in the total extinction of some bird species.

The society was awarded a Royal Charter in 1904 and in 1911, after a campaign to save the egret, the plumage trade was abolished.

John Clews, an RSPB volunteer gave a very informative talk at our February meeting. He highlighted the work of the RSPB which is one of the largest wildlife organisations with 1,100,000 members.

The society was established its headquarters in Bedfordshire with the purchase of The Lodge for £25,000.

Volunteers

Most of the work done for the RSPB is carried out by volunteers who manage the reserves and offices, organise fund-raising and conservation programmes and are involved in education.

A constant concern for the society is the birds that are in decline. We were urged to provide food for the birds during the whole year.

We were given early notice of our May Market (Saturday May 19) so keep this date free in your diaries. Details of the craft and walking group were given.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday, March 14. This will be our AGM followed by George Hook talking to us on The World of Mother of Pearl. Visitors are welcome. For details contact Penny Bailey 01543 472756.

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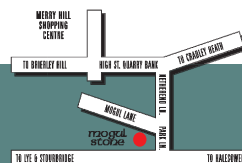
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thechronicle

Group is set up to thwart vandalism at popular park

A CAMPAIGN group has been launched to help beat anti-social behaviour, vandalism and littering in a popular Stourbridge park.

The 'Friends of Wordsley Park' has been set up by Labour candidate Derrick Hemmingsley in a bid to help residents improve and develop their green space.

Mr Hemmingsley blames high youth unemployment for the many issues that residents have raised.

He believes that boredom and cuts to youth services are causing young people to congregate in the park, causing littering of cans and bottles and drug use.

The group's first aim is to establish a committee, with the help of church and youth club leaders. They can then raise money to implement their plans with the possibility of putting on events in the park.

Vision

Mr Hemmingsley said: "My vision is to see the park being utilised for all ages."

"I believe that 'Friends of Wordsley Park' will have a major impact on the local community for the better."

Councillor Geoffrey Southall, one of the Conservative Councillors for the Wordsley District, pointed out that money had been spent on the park in recent years as part of the Liveability fund, on both the Century Garden and a multi-use games area.

He acknowledged that there was an obvious degree of disruption caused by the park yet there was no particular evidence of alcohol consumption or crime.

Councillor Southall said: "A dispersal order was called for in the park but the complaints received were not of the correct nature or quantity to warrant the order."

"Police would rather the youths be contained in the park than on the streets."

There have been two committees over the years which



Labour candidate Derrick Hemmingsley in King George V Wordsley Park

have attempted to look after the park but Councillor Southall commented that support was lacking when he last approached the issue.

He added: "I am unaware of any groups being set up and having been a councillor in Wordsley for nine years, I am surprised that I have not been involved."

For more information about the 'Friends of Wordsley Park' contact Derrick Hemmingsley on 01384 865199 or email info@wordsleylabour.org.uk

Jobs in the region will come back says chief

DUDLEY'S regeneration chief believes the borough can bounce back from the latest rise in unemployment.

New figures show job queues are getting longer in Dudley, Kidderminster and across the West Midlands.

In Dudley borough, the Jobseeker's Allowance claimant count had risen by 5.4 per cent.

The claimant count increased by 389 to 10,371 between October and December which is above the national rate of 4.1 per cent.

But Councillor Angus Adams said he believed the situation will get better.

Dudley Council is due to start work on a multi-million pound project to link Dudley Zoo, the Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Canal Trust from Tipton Road and Castle Hill.

Councillor Adams said he hoped the investment in this area of the town would encourage new businesses and investment.

Call of wildlife

NATURE enthusiasts can discover more about Worcestershire's wildlife at a series of courses run by Worcester Wildlife Trust starting on March 10. For more details go to www.worcesterwildlifetrust.co.uk/courses or book on 01905 754919.

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Our other park, Swn Y Mor, is located in the seaside village of Borth, five minutes walk from the beautiful golden sands of Ynys Las. There is plenty to do here also, with our stunning heated indoor pool, outdoor pool and sunbathing area, plus live entertainment and kids clubs. If all this seems too strenuous, you can just relax and sip a glass of wine on your decking and watch the molten sun set into silver sea. Both parks have Wi-Fi so you can work from your caravan if you want, this is also provided free to our caravan owners. If you are thinking about purchasing a caravan, give us a call for a friendly, no pressure chat or we can send you some information by post or email if you would prefer, why not come and see for yourself, be our guest for the day and try out our facilities.



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Bathrooms

We also install bathrooms from small downstairs toilets to family bathrooms. We have a variety of suppliers such as Synergy Bathroom Solutions and Frontline. If you would like a new bathroom then one of our engineers can come and give you a free quotation. Please call the Office if you would like one of the team to book you in!

Servicing and Breakdowns

We have a servicing and breakdown department. We service all appliances Boiler / Cooker / Fires. It is essential that you have your appliances serviced every year, especially with your boiler to keep up with the warranty. We also are able to come out and look at your boiler if it has broken down and advise you of what to do next. If you would like to book in or you would like some more information please contact us now!

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POINTLESS CELEBRITIES

BBC1, 6.15pm

For a show that prides itself on celebrating obscurity, tea-time quiz Pointless has been gaining rather a lot of attention lately. Not only did it make the move from BBC Two to BBC One last year, but its best-rated episode attracted more than five million viewers and, most prestigiously of all, presenter Alexander Armstrong's 'pointless friend' and co-host Richard Osman was voted the top Weird Crush of 2011 by readers of Heat magazine. Now the programme is about to make even more of a splash as it gets a special, celebrity Saturday night edition. Will the famous faces have that all-important pointless knowledge?

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.35** Rachel Allen: Home Cooking. (R) **12.00** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **12.15** Football Focus. **1.00** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Ireland v Italy (Kick-off 1.30pm). **3.25** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. England v Wales (Kick-off 4.00pm).

6.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **6.15** Pointless Celebrities. New series. Christopher Biggins and Lesley Joseph join Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman for the unorthodox general knowledge quiz.

7.10 Let's Dance for Sport Relief. More celebrity hoofing for charity, featuring former Towie stars Amy Childs and Harry Derbridge, actor and comedian Miles Jupp and ski-jump legend Eddie 'the Eagle' Edwards.

8.30 The National Lottery: Who Dares Wins. Nick Knowles hosts the game show in which two pairs of complete strangers team up, each battling to outdo the other by listing as much as they know about a given subject.

9.20 Casualty. An official complaint is made against Sam.

10.10 BBC News; Weather.

10.30 Match of the Day. Including highlights of Queens Park Rangers v Fulham; National Lottery Update.

11.45 The Football League Show.

1.00 Weatherview. **1.05** BBC News.

6.00 CBeebies. **7.00** CBBC. **12.00** Film: Howl's Moving Castle. (2004) Animated fantasy, with the voices of Jean Simmons and Christian Bale. **2.45** Animal 24/7. (R) **3.30** Birds Britannia. **4.30** Final Score. **5.20** Coast. (R) **5.50** Flog It! (R)

6.50 Dad's Army. The bumbling platoon boosts its fighting strength by acquiring an armoured car. Classic comedy, starring Clive 'Punch and Arthur' Lowe. (R)

7.20 The Story of Light Entertainment. Stephen Fry narrates a history of the genre, beginning by focusing on double acts from Laurel and Hardy to Ant and Dec. (R)

8.20 The Story of Musicals. New series. Britain's influence on musical theatre.

9.20 I'm in a Boy Band. New series. The first of three documentaries exploring the experience of being in a boy band, with contributions by members of the Four Tops, the Jackson 5 and One Direction.

10.20 TOTP2: Boy Bands. Performances by JLS, the Monkees, Westlife, Village People and Blazin' Squad.

11.20 Pan Am. The staff and crew of the Clipper Majestic look forward to 1964. Last in the series.

12.00 Film: Intermision. (2003) Comedy, starring Colin Farrell, Cillian Murphy, and Kelly Macdonald. **1.45** Film: The Sorcerers. (1967) British horror, starring Boris Karloff. **3.05** Close.

6.00 CITV: Mini CITV. **7.25** CITV. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. **11.20** This Morning: Saturday. **12.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **1.20** ITV News; Weather. **1.25** Film: Casino Royale. (1967) Spoof James Bond adventure, starring David Niven. **3.50** Film: Nanny McPhee. (2005) Period fantasy, starring Emma Thompson. **5.35** Regional News; Weather. **5.45** ITV News; Weather.

6.05 All Star Family Fortunes. EastEnders' June Brown (Dot Branning) and Blue singer Simon Webbe team up with their relatives in a bid to win £30,000 for their chosen charities.

7.05 New You've Been Framed!

7.35 Harry Hill's TV Burp. Comic review of the week's small-screen highlights.

8.05 Take Me Out. A semi-professional footballer, a busker, a cheerleader and an artist take part.

9.20 The Jonathan Ross Show. The host subjects another trio of celebrity guests to no-holds-barred questioning. Plus, musical performances by A-list bands and solo artists.

10.20 ITV News; Weather. **10.35** Film: The Bodyguard. (1992) Romantic thriller, with Kevin Costner and the late Whitney Houston.

12.50 The Zone. ITV News Headlines. **3.00** In Plain Sight. **3.45** ITV News; Weather. **5.30** ITV Morning News.

6.05 Sali Mali. (R) **6.10** The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Hoobs. (R) **7.00** Road to London 2012: Paralympics Extra. A preview of this summer's Games. (R) **7.55** The Morning Line. **8.55** T4: Everyone's Talking About - Top 10. **9.25** T4: Bourjois Boutique. **9.55** T4: Playing It Straight. **10.55** T4: New Girl. (R) **11.25** T4: The Simpsons. (R) **11.55** T4: Charlie's Angels. **12.55** T4: The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.25** T4: The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.55** Channel 4 Racing. **3.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.25** Come Dine with Me. (R)

6.00 Channel 4 News. **6.15** 4thought.tv. A debate on racism.

6.20 FILM: Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian. (2009) Fantasy comedy, starring Ben Stiller, Amy Adams, Owen Wilson and Steve Coogan.

8.20 Big Fat Gypsy Weddings. Travellers who have found themselves in trouble with the law, including a family facing eviction from an illegal site and a man due in court on the day of his fiancée's hen party. (R)

9.20 The Bank Job. Game show, hosted by George Lamb.

10.20 FILM: Shooter. (2007) Action thriller, starring Mark Wahlberg and Danny Glover.

12.45 Film: Cop Land. (1997) Police thriller, starring Sylvester Stallone. **2.25** The Tannery. (R) **2.30** Film: Little Red Flowers. (2006) Comedy drama, starring Bowen Dong. **4.00** 90210. (R) **4.40** Brothers & Sisters. (R) **5.20** Countdown. (R)

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** World's Toughest Truckers. (R) **11.00** Royal Navy: Caribbean Patrol. (R) **12.00** Braveheart: The True Story. (R) **1.00** Film: The Duel at Silver Creek. (1952) Western, starring Audie Murphy. **2.30** Film: Day of the Evil Gun. (1968) Western, starring Glenn Ford. **4.25** Film: The Dirty Dozen. (1967) Second World War action adventure, with Lee Marvin.

7.15 5 News Weekend. **7.20** NCIS. One of Tony's old murder investigations is reopened, prompting him to switch roles with Gibbs and lead the team in an inquiry that links the case to an embezzlement scheme. (R)

8.15 NCIS. The team heads into the desert to locate an artist who might be able to help solve the murder of a fellow agent, and DiNozzo learns he is in line for an inheritance. (R)

9.10 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. Langston and Nick investigate the murder of a fast-food restaurant manager, while Catherine and Greg look into the death of a woman found to have ingested two tubes of toothpaste. (R)

10.10 CSI: NY. The girlfriend of a troubled high-school sports star is found dead.

11.10 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit.

12.05 SuperCasino. **3.55** Nick's Quest. (R) **4.50** Rough Guide to Short Breaks. (R) **5.00** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.10** The Milkshake! Show. (R) **5.35** Thomas & Friends. (R) **5.45** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

ITV2 **4.50** The Brit Awards 2012 **6.50** Film: The Mummy. (1999) Action adventure, starring Brendan Fraser, Rachel Weisz, John Hannah, Arnold Vosloo and Oded Fehr. Including FYI Daily. **9.20** Take Me Out - The Gossip **10.05** Celebrity Juice **10.50** Film: Payback (1999)

ITV3 **4.50** The John Thaw Story **5.55** Goodnight Mister Tom **8.00** Doc Martin **9.00** Agatha Christie's Poirot **11.00** Those Who Kill

ITV4 **2.30** Film: Nevada Smith (1966) **5.10** Film: From Russia with Love. (1963) Spy thriller, starring Sean Connery, Robert Shaw, Daniela Bianchi and Lotte Lenya. Including FYI Daily. **7.30** The Sweeney **8.30** Minder **9.35** Film: Van Wilder: Party Liaison. (2002) Comedy, starring Ryan Reynolds, Tara Reid, Tim Matheson and Kai Penn. Including FYI Daily. **11.30** Film: GoodFellas (1990)

BBC THREE **7.00** Doctor Who **8.40** Top Gear **9.40** Live at the Apollo **10.10** Film: Disturbia (2007) **11.50** Family Guy

BBC FOUR **7.00** Decisive Weapons **8.00** Sicily Unpacked **9.00** Inspector Montalbano **10.55** Horizon: Can We Make a Star on Earth? **11.55** Top of the Pops: 1977

E4 **1.55** Hollyoaks **4.30** Perfect Couples **5.20** Scrubs **6.15** The Big Bang Theory **7.05** Happy Endings **7.35** How I Met Your Mother **8.05** Rules of Engagement **8.35** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: I, Robot. (2004) Sci-fi thriller, with Will Smith, Bridget Moynahan and Alan Tudyk. **11.15** The Big Bang Theory

FILM4 **3.00** Journey to the Center of the Earth (2008) **4.50** Bogus (1996) **7.05** The Seeker: The Dark Is Rising (2007) **9.00** What Happens in Vegas (2008) **10.55** End of Days (1999)

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Choice

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HOMELAND

Channel 4, 9pm

In this second offering, post-traumatic stress sufferer Brody is still having a hard time at home with his family. He's plagued by violent nightmares and hallucinations, and resists media pressure to play the role of the returning war hero. Meanwhile, Saul, who is still not convinced that Brody is working for al-Qaeda, manages to get Carrie's four weeks' surveillance on the record so that she no longer has to hide what she's doing. Observing the footage of life in Brody's home closely, she tries to understand what's going on in his mind, and concludes he's still struggling with the fact that he's become a terrorist. Claire Danes and Damian Lewis head the cast.

6.00 Breakfast. **7.40** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Country Tracks. (R) Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.00** Sunday Politics. **1.05** EastEnders. **3.00** Match of the Day Live: The League Cup Final. Liverpool v Cardiff City (Kick-off 4.00pm).

6.30 BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **7.00** Countryfile. Matt Baker finds out about Cornwall's famous miners, while elsewhere in the county Ellie Harrison explores a marine habitat created from an old naval frigate.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. The team heads to St Andrews University, where items of interest include a bowl believed to have belonged to Bonnie Prince Charlie, and Chinese vases from the Forbidden City.

9.00 Upstairs Downstairs. Lady Agnes catches the eye of an American millionaire.

10.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

10.25 Room 101 - Extra Storage. With Nick Hewer, Carol Vorderman and Rhod Gilbert.

11.05 The League Cup Show. Liverpool v Cardiff City.

11.50 The Celebrity Apprentice USA. The team is challenged to create an event for a new mobile phone.

1.15 Weatherview. **1.20** Sign Zone: Film 2012 with Claudia Winkleman. (R) **2.00** Holly City. (R) **3.00** Accused. (R) **4.00** BBC News.

6.00 CBeebies. **7.00** CBBC. **10.00** Something for the Weekend. **11.35** Film: The Red Beret. (1953) Second World War adventure, starring Alan Ladd. **1.00** Film: Cowboy. (1958) Western, starring Jack Lemmon. **2.30** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Scotland v France (Kick-off 3.00pm). **5.00** Songs of Praise. **5.30** Coast. (R)

6.00 I'm in a Boy Band. The first of three documentaries exploring the experience of being in a boy band, with Harrison exploring a marine habitat created from an old naval frigate.

7.00 World's Most Dangerous Roads. Rhod Gilbert and Greg Davies negotiate crumbling mountain roads as they travel through Nepal, a country with one of the world's highest rates of road traffic accidents. (R)

8.00 Top Gear. **9.00** Swimming with Crocodiles. Part two of two. Ben Fogle meets the saltwater crocodiles of Australia.

10.00 Match of the Day 2. Including highlights of Arsenal v Tottenham Hotspur.

11.15 Three Men Go to Ireland. Part one of two. Dara O Briain, Griff Rhys Jones and Rory McGrath sail from Dublin to Limerick. (R)

12.00 Rugby Union: Six Nations Highlights. **12.45** Film: Point Blank. (1967) Crime thriller, starring Lee Marvin. **2.15** BBC News. **4.00** Close.

6.00 CITV: Mini CITV. **7.25** CITV. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Ade in Britain. (R) **10.30** Dinner Date. (R) **11.30** Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **12.30** ITV News; Weather. **12.45** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **1.45** Film: Columbo: Agenda for Murder. (1990) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk and Patrick McGeehan. **3.45** Midsomer Murders. (R) **5.50** Regional News; Weather.

6.05 ITV News; Weather. **6.20** Harry Hill's TV Burp. Comic review of the week's small-screen highlights. (R)

6.50 Dancing on Ice. The remaining seven celebrities take part in a rock-themed show, battling to impress the judges and win viewers' votes. Presented by Phillip Schofield and Christine Bleakley. The results can be seen at 9.30pm.

8.30 Wild at Heart. A mystery woman arrives, claiming to be Ed's wife, while a shocking link is made between some seemingly unrelated animal deaths. Jill Halfpenny (EastEnders) joins the cast.

9.30 Dancing on Ice: The Skate Off. The lowest-scoring couples compete.

10.00 That Sunday Night Show

10.30 ITV News; Weather.

10.45 Piers Morgan's Life Stories: Vinnie Jones (R)

11.50 Premiership Rugby Union. Action from the week 16 fixtures.

12.40 The Zone. ITV News Headlines. **2.45** River Monsters. (R) **3.35** ITV Nightscreen. **5.30** ITV Morning News.

6.05 Sali Mail. (R) **6.10** The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Hoobs. (R) **7.00** Channel 4 Presents - 2012: Danielle Brown - Part Two. (R) **7.05** That Paralympic Show. (R) **7.30** Sailing: America's Cup Uncovered. (R) **7.55** T4: Bourjois Boutique. (R) **8.25** T4: One Tree Hill. (R) **9.20** T4: Hollyoaks. (R) **11.55** T4: The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.25** T4: The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.25** T4: The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** T4: The Simpsons. (R) **2.35** Film: Robots. (2005) Animated adventure, with the voice of Ewan McGregor. **4.20** Deal or No Deal. **5.20** Time Team.

6.25 Channel 4 News.

6.55 4thought.tv. Britain's racial tolerance is questioned.

7.00 The Political Slot. With Conservative MP Mark Prisk.

7.05 Home of the Future. The Peras get to grips with brainwave-controlled video games.

8.00 The Hotel. The staff tackle Christmas, the biggest event of the year, but manager Mark faces a catalogue of problems, from dodgy decorations to vegetarian dinner mix-ups. Last in the series.

9.00 Homeland. Carrie keeps Brody's home under surveillance.

10.00 FILM: Law Abiding Citizen. (2009) Thriller, starring Gerard Butler.

12.05 Film: Terminal Velocity. (1994) Action thriller, starring Charlie Sheen. **1.50** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.35** New Girl. (R) **3.00** 90210. (R) **3.45** Brothers & Sisters. (R) **4.25** Time Team. (R) **5.20** Countdown. (R)

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowerpots. (R) **6.25** Fireman Sam. (R) **6.35** Harry and His Bucket Full of Dinosaurs. (R) **6.50** Castle Farm. (R) **6.55** Igam Ogam. (R) **7.05** Roodbarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.15** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.25** Family! (R) **7.35** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.45** Little Lodgers. **7.50** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **7.55** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **8.00** Little Princess. (R) **8.15** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.30** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **8.45** Rupert Bear. (R) **8.55** Milkshake! Show Songs. **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.10** The Mr Men Show. (R) **9.40** Mist: Sheepdog Tales. (R) **10.00** Animal Rescue Squad. (R) **10.20** Grey's Anatomy. (R) **11.15** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.20** Film: The Cassandra Crossing. (1976) Disaster movie, with Burt Lancaster. **2.50** Film: My Girl. (1991) Drama, starring Anna Chlumsky and Macaulay Culkin. **4.50** Film: Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World. (1998) Disney animated sequel, featuring the voice of Irene Bedard.

6.10 FILM: The House Bunny. (2008) Premiere. Comedy, starring Anna Faris.

8.00 Cowboy Builders. (R)

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 FILM: The Outlaw Josey Wales. (1976)

11.50 FILM: Maximum Risk. (1996) Action thriller, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme.

1.40 SuperCasino. **4.00** UEFA Europa League Highlights. **4.45** Rough Guide to Bang for Your Buck. (R) **5.00** Ghost Rider 2: 3D - (12A) FLS

5.10 The Milkshake! Show. (R) **5.35** Thomas & Friends. (R) **5.45** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

ITV2
1.50 Film: Wild Wild West (1999) **4.00** The Only Way Is Essex **5.30** The Cube **6.30** Film: The Mummy Returns (2001) **9.00** Benidorm **10.00** The Only Way Is Essex **10.45** Film: I Am Legend. (2007) Sci-fi thriller, starring Will Smith, Alice Braga and Charlie Tahan.

ITV3
4.50 Hidden Treasure **6.50** Inspector Morse **9.00** Lewis. A body is found on an Oxford tour bus. **11.00** Crackery

ITV4
2.35 Film: The Story of Dr Wassell (1944) **5.20** Film: The Battle of Midway (1976) Fact-based Second World War drama, starring Charlton Heston. **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00** Film: Sudden Death. (1995) Action thriller, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, Powers Boothe, Raymond J Barry and Whittni Wright. Including FYI Daily. **11.15** Film: Dirty Harry. (1971) Don Siegel's thriller, starring Clint Eastwood, Harry Guardino and Andy Robinson.

BBC THREE
7.00 Let's Dance for Sport Relief **9.00** Young Farmer of the Year **9.30** Being Human **10.00** Pramface **10.30** Family Guy **11.15** American Dad!

BBC FOUR
7.00 Natural World: The Bloodhound and the Beagle **8.00** One Man and His Dog **9.00** Film: My Dog Tulip (2009) **10.20** Film: The Baader Meinhof Complex (2008)

E4
4.35 Samantha Who? **5.00** Being Erica **6.00** 90210 **6.55** Film: She's the Man (2006) **9.00** Desperate Housewives **11.00** Skins

FILM4
3.20 Little Manhattan (2005) **5.05** The Golden Compass (2007) **7.20** The Man (2005) Comedy, starring Samuel L Jackson and Eugene Levy. **9.00** Iron Man (2008) **11.15** Bunny and the Bull (2009)

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FRIDAY, MONDAY TO THURSDAY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY MUPPETS (U) <td>1235</td>	1235
1510 1750 2030	
FRIDAY, MONDAY TO THURSDAY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY GHOST RIDER 2: 3D - (12A) FLS <td>ONE FOR THE MONEY (12A) FLS</td>	ONE FOR THE MONEY (12A) FLS
1650 1850	1630 1840 2050
1310	1420 1630 1840 2050
FRIDAY, MONDAY TO THURSDAY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY SAFE HOUSE (15) FLS <td>KIDS CLUB - SATURDAY AND SUNDAY</td>	KIDS CLUB - SATURDAY AND SUNDAY
1310 1540 1810 2040	ALVIN AND CHIPMUNKS - CHIPWICKED (U)
1310 1540 1810 2040	1140
FRIDAY, MONDAY TO THURSDAY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY THE WOMAN IN BLACK (12A) <td>MONSTER IN PARIS (U) </td>	MONSTER IN PARIS (U)
1850 2100	1140
1400 1640 1850 2100	PUSHS IN BOOTS
1400 1640 1850 2100	1200

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Monday

BBC1 6.00 Breakfast. 9.15 A Picture of Health. 10.00 Homes Under the Hammer. (R) BBC News; Weather. 11.00 Doortse Crime 999. 11.30 Cowboy Trap. BBC News; Weather. 12.15 Bargain Hunt. (R) 1.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.30 Regional News; Weather. 1.45 Doctors. 2.15 The Indian Doctor. 3.00 BBC News; Weather; Regional News. 3.05 CBBC. 5.15 Pointless. 6.00 BBC News; Weather. 6.30 Regional News Programmes; Weather. 7.00 The One Show. 7.30 Inside Out. BBC News; Regional News. 8.00 EastEnders. 8.30 The Cost of Raising Britain - Panorama. 9.00 Empire. 10.00 BBC News. 10.25 Regional News. 10.50 A Question of Sport. 11.05 Late Kick Off. 11.35 The Graham Norton Show. (R) 12.20 The Celebrity Apprentice USA. 1.45 Weatherview. 1.50 Sign Zone: Great British Food Festival. (R) 2.50 Royal Wedding. (R) 3.10 Flip Off Britain. (R) 4.40 BBC News.

BBC2 6.00 CBeebies. 7.00 CBBC. 8.30 Cbeebies. 11.30 BBC World News. 12.00 Daily Politics. 1.00 Animal Park. (R) 1.45 On the Road with the Chief Beekeeper. 2.15 Weakest Link. 3.00 Helicopter Heroes. (R) 3.45 Flog It! (R) 4.30 Perfection. (R) 5.15 Antiques Road Trip. 6.00 Eggheads. 6.30 My Life in Books. 7.00 David Hockney: The Art of Seeing. 8.00 University Challenge. 8.30 The Bleak Old Shop of Shrop. 9.00 The Tube. 10.00 Watson & Oliver. 10.30 Newsnight. 11.20 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.00 BBC Learning Zone.

ITV1 6.00 Daybreak. 8.30 Lorraine. 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. 10.30 This Morning. 12.30 Loose Women. 1.30 ITV News; Weather. 1.55 Regional News; Weather. 2.00 Dickinsons Real Deal. (R) 3.00 The Alan Titchmarsh Show. 3.59 Regional Weather. 4.00 Midsomer Murders. (R) 5.00 The Chase. 6.00 Regional News; Weather. 6.30 ITV News; Weather. 7.00 Emmerdale. 7.30 Coronation Street. 8.00 The Dales. 8.30 Coronation Street. 9.00 Whitechapel. 10.00 ITV News at Ten; Weather. 10.30 Regional News; Weather. 10.35 The Agenda. 11.05 That Sunday Night Show. (R) 11.40 River Monsters. (R) 12.05 The Unforgettable Kanny Elsworth. (R) 12.30 The Zone. ITV News Headlines. 2.35 Champions League Weekly. 3.00 ITV Nightscreen. 4.35 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 5.30 ITV Morning News.

Channel 4 6.05 Sall Mali. (R) 6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 Freshly Squeezed. 7.30 According to Jim. 7.55 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.25 Frasier. (R) 8.55 Undercover Boss. (R) 9.55 Three in a Bed. (R) 11.00 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. 12.00 Channel 4 News Midday Summary. 12.05 Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard. (R) 12.10 The Fabulous Baker Brothers. (R) 12.40 Film: Terms of Endearment. (1983) Drama, starring Shirley MacLaine. 3.10 Countdown. 4.00 Deal or No Deal. 5.00 Come Dine with Me. 5.30 Coach Trip. 6.00 The Simpsons. (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks. 7.00 Channel 4 News. 7.55 4thout. 8.00 SuperScrimps. 9.00 Coppers. 10.00 Proud and Prejudiced. 11.05 Homeland. (R) 12.10 Random Acts. 12.15 Shameless. (R) 1.15 Comedy Lab: Rick and Peter. (R) 1.40 Embarrassing Bodies: Back to the Clinic. (R) 2.35 Undressing My Mother. (R) 2.40 Brothers & Sisters. (R) 3.25 90210. (R) 4.10 This Is Me. (R) 4.15 Home on the Future. (R) 5.10 Full Metal Challenge. (R)

Channel 5 6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 The Wright Stuff. 11.10 LIVE with Gabby. 12.10 5 News Lunchtime. 12.15 The Removal Men: Pickfords. (R) 1.15 Home and Away. 1.45 Neighbours. 2.15 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. (R) 3.10 Film: Killers Flood. The Day the Dam Broke. (2003) Thriller, starring Joe Lando. 5.05 5 News at 5. 5.30 Neighbours. Rhys tells Karl why he is desperate to become a surgeon. (R) 6.00 Home and Away. Henri Brown returns to Sunset Bay High. (R) 6.30 5 News at 6.30. 7.00 World's Toughest Truckee. (R) 5 News Update. 8.00 Police Interceptors. 5 News at 9. 9.00 Royal Marines: Mission Afghanistan. 10.00 Film: Starship Troopers 3: Marauder. (2008) Action, sequel, starring Casper Van Dien, Jolene Blalock and Stephen Hogan. 12.10 Soho Blues. (R) 1.05 SuperCasino. 3.55 House Doctor. (R) 4.20 Wildlife SOS. (R) 5.10 HouseBusters. (R)

Tuesday

BBC1 6.00 Breakfast. 9.15 A Picture of Health. 10.00 Homes Under the Hammer. (R) BBC News; Weather. 11.00 Doortse Crime 999. 11.30 Cowboy Trap. BBC News; Weather. 12.15 Bargain Hunt. 1.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.30 Regional News; Weather. 1.45 Doctors. 2.15 The Indian Doctor. 3.00 BBC News; Weather; Regional News. 3.05 CBBC. 5.15 Pointless. 6.00 BBC News; Weather. 6.30 Regional News Programmes; Weather. 7.00 The One Show. 7.30 EastEnders; BBC News; Regional News. 8.00 Holly City. 9.00 Prisoners' Wives. 10.00 BBC News. 10.25 Regional News; National Lottery Update. 10.35 The Richard Dimbleby Lecture 2012. 11.20 Who Do You Think You Are? US. 11.50 The Celebrity Apprentice USA. 1.15 Weatherview. 1.20 Sign Zone: Inside Men. (R) 2.20 An Island Parish. (R) 2.50 Rip Off Britain. (R) 3.20 Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) 4.05 BBC News.

BBC2 6.00 CBeebies. 7.00 CBBC. 8.30 Cbeebies. 11.30 BBC World News. 12.00 Daily Politics. 1.00 Animal Park. (R) 1.30 To Buy or Not to Buy. (R) 2.15 Weakest Link. (R) 3.00 Helicopter Heroes. (R) 3.45 Flog It! (R) 4.30 Perfection. (R) 5.15 Antiques Road Trip. 6.00 Eggheads. 6.30 My Life in Books. 7.00 Raymond Blanc: The Very Hungry Frenchman. The chef explores the region of Alsace. (R) 8.00 Alex Polizzi: The Fixer. Alex is called to a faltering fancy-dress business in Essex. 9.00 Have I Got Old News for You. (R) 10.30 Newsnight; Weather. 11.20 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.05 BBC News. 4.00 BBC Learning Zone.

ITV1 6.00 Daybreak. 8.30 Lorraine. 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. 10.30 This Morning. 12.30 Loose Women. 1.30 ITV News; Weather. 1.55 Regional News; Weather. 2.00 Dickinsons Real Deal. (R) 3.00 The Alan Titchmarsh Show. 3.59 Regional Weather. 4.00 Midsomer Murders. (R) 5.00 The Chase. 6.00 Regional News; Weather. 6.30 ITV News; Weather. 7.00 Emmerdale. 7.30 River Monsters. (R) 8.00 The Exit List. 9.00 The Biggest Loser. 10.00 ITV News at Ten; Weather. 10.30 Regional News; Weather. 10.35 Benidorm. (R) 11.35 The Cube. (R) 12.30 The Zone; ITV News Headlines. 3.00 Crossing Jordan. (R) 3.50 ITV Nightscreen. 5.30 ITV Morning News.

Channel 4 6.05 Sall Mali. (R) 6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 Freshly Squeezed. 7.30 According to Jim. 7.55 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.25 Frasier. (R) 8.55 Undercover Boss. (R) 9.55 Three in a Bed. (R) 11.00 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. 12.00 Channel 4 News Midday Summary. 12.05 Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard. 12.20 Film: Battle Cry. (1955) 3.10 Countdown. 4.00 Deal or No Deal. 5.00 Come Dine with Me. 5.30 Coach Trip. 6.00 The Simpsons. (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks. 7.00 Channel 4 News. 7.55 4thout. 8.00 SuperSize vs SuperSnack. 9.00 Big Fat Gypsy Weddings. 10.00 Shameless. 11.05 Random Acts. 11.10 Desperate Housewives. 12.10 Poker. 1.10 Sailing: America's Cup Uncovered. 1.35 KOTV. Boxing Weekly. 2.05 Best of British. (R) 3.00 Late Night Poker. (R) 3.55 Brief Encounters of the Sporting Mind: Rally Driving. (R) 4.00 Brief Encounters of the Sporting Mind: Speeding. (R) 4.10 That Paralympic Show. (R) 4.35 Road to London 2012: Paralympics Extra. 5.30 Film Superbike World Championship. 5.55 Channel 4 Presents - 2012: Mandip Sehmi - Part Two. (R)

Channel 5 6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 The Wright Stuff. 11.10 LIVE with Gabby. 12.10 5 News Lunchtime. 12.15 The Removal Men: Pickfords. (R) 1.15 Home and Away. 1.45 Neighbours. 2.15 CSI: NY. (R) 3.15 Film: The Staircase Murders. (2007) Fact-based thriller, with Treat Williams and Michael. 5.05 5 News at 5. 5.30 Neighbours. (R) 6.00 Home and Away. (R) 6.30 5 News at 6.30. 7.00 Police Interceptors. (R) 5 News Update. 8.00 Apollo 13: The True Story. The ill-fated 1970 mission and the movie version compared. 5 News at 9. 9.00 Body of Proof. 10.00 CSI: NY. (R) 10.55 CSI: Miami. (R) 11.55 CSI: NY. (R) 12.55 Inside Hollywood. 1.05 SuperCasino. 3.55 House Doctor. (R) 4.20 Wildlife SOS. (R) 5.10 HouseBusters. (R)

Wednesday

BBC1 6.00 Breakfast. 9.15 A Picture of Health. 10.00 Homes Under the Hammer. BBC News; Weather. 11.00 Doortse Crime 999. 11.30 Cowboy Trap. BBC News; Weather. 12.15 Bargain Hunt. 1.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.30 Regional News; Weather. 1.45 Doctors. 2.15 The Indian Doctor. 3.00 BBC News; Weather; Regional News. 3.05 CBBC. 5.15 Pointless. 6.00 BBC News; Weather. 6.30 Regional News Programmes; Weather. 6.55 Party Political Broadcast. (R) 7.00 The One Show. 7.30 The Food Inspectors; BBC News; Regional News. 8.00 Waterloo Road. 9.00 MasterChef. 10.00 BBC News. 10.25 Regional News; Weather. 10.35 The National Lottery Wednesday Night Draws. 10.45 Kevin Bridges What's the Story? 11.15 Film 2012 with Claudia Winkelman; National Lottery Update. 11.55 Film: Racing for Time. (2008) 1.20 Weatherview. 1.25 Sign Zone: See Hear. (R) 1.55 Upstairs Downstairs. (R) 2.55 An Island Parish. (R) 3.25 Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) 4.10 BBC News.

BBC2 6.00 CBeebies. 7.00 CBBC. 8.30 Cbeebies. 11.30 BBC World News. 12.00 Daily Politics. 1.00 Animal Park. (R) 1.30 To Buy or Not to Buy. (R) 2.15 Weakest Link. (R) 3.00 Helicopter Heroes. (R) 3.45 Flog It! (R) 4.25 Perfection. (R) 5.10 Antiques Road Trip. 5.55 Party Political Broadcast. 6.00 Eggheads. 6.30 My Life in Books. 7.00 Raymond Blanc: The Very Hungry Frenchman. 8.00 Japan - Children of the Tsunami. 10.00 Mock the Week - Again. (R) 10.30 Newsnight; Weather. 11.20 On Hannibal's Trail. (R) 11.50 On Hannibal's Trail. (R) 12.20 The Tube. (R) 1.20 BBC News. 3.40 Close. 4.00 BBC Learning Zone.

ITV1 6.00 Daybreak. 8.30 Lorraine. 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. 10.30 This Morning. 12.30 Loose Women. 1.30 ITV News; Weather. 1.55 Regional News; Weather. 2.00 Dickinsons Real Deal. (R) 3.00 The Alan Titchmarsh Show. 3.59 Regional Weather. 4.00 Midsomer Murders. (R) 5.00 The Chase. 6.00 Regional News; Weather. 6.30 ITV News; Weather. 7.00 Emmerdale. 7.30 Life in Books. 7.55 Midday Summary. 12.05 Channel 4 Presents - 2012: David Smith - Part Two. (R) 12.10 Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard. (R) 12.30 Film: Reach for the Sky. (1958) 3.10 Countdown. 4.00 Deal or No Deal. 5.00 Come Dine with Me. 5.30 Coach Trip. 6.00 The Simpsons. (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks. 7.00 Channel 4 News. 7.55 4thout. 8.00 Diddy Daycare. 9.00 On the Border. 10.00 Our Man in Ibiza. 10.05 Coppers. (R) 12.10 Random Acts. (R) 12.15 Proud and Prejudiced. (R) 1.15 Soft. (R) 1.30 The World's Most Identical Twins and Me. (R) 2.25 Slow Joe. (R) 2.30 The Bible: A History. (R) 3.25 Time Team. (R) 4.20 Atlantic. (R) 4.30 Brothers & Sisters. (R) 5.10 Countdown. (R) 5.55 Sall Mali. (R)

Channel 4 6.00 The Treacle People. (R) 6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 Freshly Squeezed. 7.30 According to Jim. 7.55 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.25 Frasier. (R) 8.55 Undercover Boss USA. (R) 9.55 Three in a Bed. (R) 11.00 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. 12.00 Channel 4 News Midday Summary. 12.05 Channel 4 News Midday Summary. 12.05 Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard. 12.20 Film: Reach for the Sky. (1958) 3.10 Countdown. 4.00 Deal or No Deal. 5.00 Come Dine with Me. 5.30 Coach Trip. 6.00 The Simpsons. (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks. 7.00 Channel 4 News. 7.55 4thout. 8.00 Diddy Daycare. 9.00 On the Border. 10.00 Our Man in Ibiza. 10.05 Coppers. (R) 12.10 Random Acts. (R) 12.15 Proud and Prejudiced. (R) 1.15 Soft. (R) 1.30 The World's Most Identical Twins and Me. (R) 2.25 Slow Joe. (R) 2.30 The Bible: A History. (R) 3.25 Time Team. (R) 4.20 Atlantic. (R) 4.30 Brothers & Sisters. (R) 5.10 Countdown. (R) 5.55 Sall Mali. (R)

Channel 5 6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 The Wright Stuff. 11.10 LIVE with Gabby. 12.10 5 News Lunchtime. 12.15 The Removal Men: Pickfords. (R) 1.15 Home and Away. 1.45 Neighbours. 2.15 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. (R) 3.15 Film: Accused at 17 (2009) Premiere. Drama, starring Cynthia Gibb. 5.05 5 News at 5. 5.30 Neighbours. (R) 6.00 Home and Away. (R) 6.30 5 News at 6.30. 7.00 Cowboy Builders. (R) 5 News Update. 8.00 Big Body Squad. 5 News at 9. 9.00 NCIS. 10.00 Law & Order: Criminal Intent. 10.55 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. (R) 11.55 Poker. The Big Game. 12.55 SuperCasino. 3.55 House Doctor. (R) 4.20 Wildlife SOS. (R) 5.10 HouseBusters. (R)

Thursday

BBC1 6.00 Breakfast. 9.15 A Picture of Health. 10.00 Homes Under the Hammer. (R) BBC News; Weather. 11.00 Doortse Crime 999. 11.30 Cowboy Trap. BBC News; Weather. 12.15 Bargain Hunt. (R) 1.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.30 Regional News; Weather. 1.45 Doctors. 2.15 The Indian Doctor. 3.00 BBC News; Weather; Regional News. 3.05 CBBC. 5.15 Pointless. 6.00 BBC News; Weather. 6.30 Regional News Programmes; Weather. 7.00 The One Show. 7.30 EastEnders; BBC News; Regional News. 8.00 The Great British Countryside. 9.00 MasterChef. 10.00 BBC News. 10.25 Regional News; Weather. 10.35 Question Time. 11.35 This Week. 12.20 Weatherview. 12.25 Sign Zone: The Cost of Raising Britain - Panorama. (R) 12.55 Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) 1.40 Accused. (R) 2.40 Countryside. (R) 3.40 BBC News.

BBC2 6.00 CBeebies. 7.00 CBBC. 8.30 Cbeebies. 11.30 BBC World News. 12.00 Daily Politics. 1.00 Animal Park. (R) 1.30 To Buy or Not to Buy. (R) 2.15 Weakest Link. 3.00 Helicopter Heroes. (R) 3.45 Flog It! (R) 4.30 Perfection. (R) 5.15 Antiques Road Trip. 6.00 Eggheads. 6.30 My Life in Books. 7.00 Raymond Blanc: The Very Hungry Frenchman. 8.00 Japan - Children of the Tsunami. 10.00 Mock the Week - Again. (R) 10.30 Newsnight; Weather. 11.20 On Hannibal's Trail. (R) 11.50 On Hannibal's Trail. (R) 12.20 The Tube. (R) 1.20 BBC News. 3.40 Close. 4.00 BBC Learning Zone.

ITV1 6.00 Daybreak. 8.30 Lorraine. 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. 10.30 This Morning. 12.30 Loose Women. 1.30 ITV News; Weather. 1.55 Regional News; Weather. 2.00 Dickinsons Real Deal. (R) 3.00 The Alan Titchmarsh Show. 3.59 Regional Weather. 4.00 Midsomer Murders. (R) 5.00 The Chase. 6.00 Regional News; Weather. 6.30 ITV News; Weather. 7.00 Emmerdale. 7.30 Life in Books. 7.55 Midday Summary. 12.05 Channel 4 Presents - 2012: David Smith - Part Two. (R) 12.10 Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard. (R) 12.30 Film: Reach for the Sky. (1958) 3.10 Countdown. 4.00 Deal or No Deal. 5.00 Come Dine with Me. 5.30 Coach Trip. 6.00 The Simpsons. (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks. 7.00 Channel 4 News. 7.55 4thout. 8.00 Diddy Daycare. 9.00 On the Border. 10.00 Our Man in Ibiza. 10.05 Coppers. (R) 12.10 Random Acts. (R) 12.15 Proud and Prejudiced. (R) 1.15 Soft. (R) 1.30 The World's Most Identical Twins and Me. (R) 2.25 Slow Joe. (R) 2.30 The Bible: A History. (R) 3.25 Time Team. (R) 4.20 Atlantic. (R) 4.30 Brothers & Sisters. (R) 5.10 Countdown. (R) 5.55 Sall Mali. (R)

Channel 4 6.05 Sall Mali. (R) 6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 Freshly Squeezed. 7.30 According to Jim. 7.55 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.25 Frasier. (R) 8.55 Undercover Boss USA. (R) 9.55 Three in a Bed. (R) 11.00 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. 12.00 Channel 4 News Midday Summary. 12.05 Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard. 12.20 Film: Reach for the Sky. (1958) 3.10 Countdown. 4.00 Deal or No Deal. 5.00 Come Dine with Me. 5.30 Coach Trip. 6.00 The Simpsons. (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks. 7.00 Channel 4 News. 7.55 4thout. 8.00 Location, Location, Location. 9.00 Make Bradford British. 10.00 Our Man in Ibiza. 10.05 Coppers. (R) 12.10 Random Acts. (R) 12.15 Proud and Prejudiced. (R) 1.15 Soft. (R) 1.30 The World's Most Identical Twins and Me. (R) 2.25 Slow Joe. (R) 2.30 The Bible: A History. (R) 3.25 Time Team. (R) 4.20 Atlantic. (R) 4.30 Brothers & Sisters. (R) 5.10 Countdown. (R) 5.55 Sall Mali. (R)

Channel 5 6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 The Wright Stuff. 11.10 LIVE with Gabby. 12.10 5 News Lunchtime. 12.15 The Removal Men: Pickfords. (R) 1.15 Home and Away. 1.45 Neighbours. 2.15 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. (R) 3.15 Film: Accused at 17 (2009) Premiere. Drama, starring Cynthia Gibb. 5.05 5 News at 5. 5.30 Neighbours. (R) 6.00 Home and Away. (R) 6.30 5 News at 6.30. 7.00 Holiday Heaven on Earth. San Antonio. The Hague and Quebec. 7.30 How Do They Do It? (R) 5 News Update. 8.00 The Da Vinci Shroud - Revealed. (R) 5 News at 9. 9.00 Film: The Transporter. (2002) Action adventure, starring Jason Statham. 10.55 Ultimate Police Interceptors. (R) 11.55 Inside Hollywood. (R) 12.05 SuperCasino. 3.55 House Doctor. (R) 4.20 Wildlife SOS. (R) 5.10 HouseBusters. (R)

Friday

BBC1 6.00 Breakfast. 9.15 A Picture of Health. 10.00 Homes Under the Hammer. BBC News; Weather. 11.00 Doortse Crime 999. 11.30 Cowboy Trap. BBC News; Weather. 12.15 Bargain Hunt. 1.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.30 Regional News; Weather. 1.45 Doctors. 2.15 The Indian Doctor. 3.00 BBC News; Weather; Regional News. 3.05 CBBC. 5.15 Pointless. 6.00 BBC News; Weather. 6.30 Regional News Programmes; Weather. 7.00 The One Show. 7.30 EastEnders; BBC News; Regional News. 8.00 EastEnders. 8.30 Norton. (R) 9.00 New Tricks. (R) 10.00 BBC News. 10.25 Regional News; Weather. 10.35 The Graham Norton Show. 11.20 The National Lottery Friday Night Draws. 11.30 Film: The Haunting. (1999) Horror remake, starring Liam Neeson. 1.15 Weatherview. 1.20 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) 2.20 Bees, Butterflies and Blooms. (R) 3.20 Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) 4.05 BBC News.

BBC2 6.00 CBeebies. 7.00 CBBC. 8.30 Cbeebies. 11.30 BBC World News. 12.00 Daily Politics. 1.00 Animal Park. (R) 1.30 To Buy or Not to Buy. (R) 2.15 Weakest Link. 3.00 Helicopter Heroes. (R) 3.45 Flog It! (R) 4.30 Perfection. (R) 5.15 Antiques Road Trip. 6.00 Eggheads. 6.30 My Life in Books. 7.00 Raymond Blanc: The Very Hungry Frenchman. 8.00 Mastermind. 8.30 Mastermind. 9.00 Melvyn Bragg on Class & Culture. 10.00 QI. (R) 10.30 Newsnight. 11.00 The Review Show. 11.45 Glover. 11.50 Film: Hard Gans. (2006) Thriller, with Patrick Wilson and Ellen Page. 1.30 The Culture Show. (R) 2.30 BBC News. 4.50 Close.

ITV1 6.00 Daybreak. 8.30 Lorraine. 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. 10.30 This Morning. 12.30 Loose Women. 1.30 ITV News; Weather. 1.55 Regional News; Weather. 2.00 Dickinsons Real Deal. (R) 3.00 The Alan Titchmarsh Show. 3.59 Regional Weather. 4.00 Midsomer Murders. (R) 5.00 The Chase. 6.00 Regional News; Weather. 6.30 ITV News; Weather. 7.00 Emmerdale. 7.30 Coronation Street. 8.00 Benidorm. 10.00 ITV News at Ten; Weather. 10.30 Regional News; Weather. 10.35 Film: Lethal Weapon. (1987) Action thriller, starring Mel Gibson and Danny Glover. 12.30 The Zone; ITV News Headlines. 2.40 Film: Half Light. (2006) Supernatural thriller, starring Demi Moore. 4.30 ITV Nightscreen. 5.30 ITV Morning News.

Channel 4 6.00 The Treacle People. (R) 6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 Freshly Squeezed. 7.30 According to Jim. 7.55 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.25 Frasier. (R) 8.55 Undercover Boss USA. (R) 9.55 Three in a Bed. (R) 11.00 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. 12.00 Channel 4 News Midday Summary. 12.05 Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard. 12.20 Film: Reach for the Sky. (1958) 3.10 Countdown. 4.00 Deal or No Deal. 5.00 Come Dine with Me. 5.30 Coach Trip. 6.00 The Simpsons. (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks. 7.00 Channel 4 News. 7.55 4thout. 8.00 Location, Location, Location. 9.00 Make Bradford British. 10.00 Our Man in Ibiza. 10.05 Coppers. (R) 12.10 Random Acts. (R) 12.15 Proud and Prejudiced. (R) 1.15 Soft. (R) 1.30 The World's Most Identical Twins and Me. (R) 2.25 Slow Joe. (R) 2.30 The Bible: A History. (R) 3.25 Time Team. (R) 4.20 Atlantic. (R) 4.30 Brothers & Sisters. (R) 5.10 Countdown. (R) 5.55 Sall Mali. (R)

Channel 5 6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 The Wright Stuff. 11.10 LIVE with Gabby. 12.10 5 News Lunchtime. 12.15 The Removal Men: Pickfords. (R) 1.15 Home and Away. 1.45 Neighbours. 2.15 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. (R) 3.10 Film: Perfect Romance. (2004) Romantic comedy, with Kathleen Quinlan and Henry Ian Cusick. 5.05 5 News at 5. 5.30 Neighbours. (R) 6.00 Home and Away. (R) 6.30 5 News. 7.00 Royal Navy: Caribean Patrol. (R) 5 News. 8.00 Eddie Stobart: Trucks and Trailers. New Series. A driver tries to move London's Piccadilly Lights. 5 News at 9. 9.00 The Mentalist. Red John targets an FBI agent. 10.00 Castle. The race is on to solve two murders. 10.55 Law & Order: Criminal Intent. Logan and Falco investigate the murder of an obstetrician. (R) 11.55 Inside Hollywood. (R) 12.05 SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. 3.55 Motorsport Mundial. 4.20 Wildlife SOS. (R) 5.10 HouseBusters. (R)

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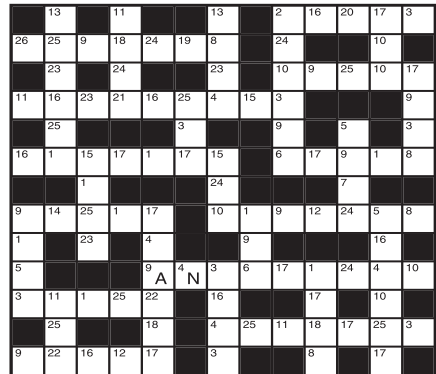
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Brain Gym

No.157

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
T Y B X H U G A C L S V W
E I M P J Q N Z R O F D K

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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 1 & 10 Dn. Continuing a stage career and maintaining one's respectability (7,2,11)
8. Falstaff's follower is no young man, initially (3)
9. Carried away, being unusually ardent about games (11)
11. Somehow parries the weapons (7)
12. Don't dissent from an idea that a vice is unending (5)
13. Works hard and produces new stock (6)
15. They produce berries for those who have grown old in office (6)
17. What may be raised in the National Army (5)
18. Is included in a requirement for the making of cordial (7)
20. Frozen to the core? (4-7)
22. Don't stand for prevarication (3)
23. Horticultural plot is surrounding a cluster of flowers (9)

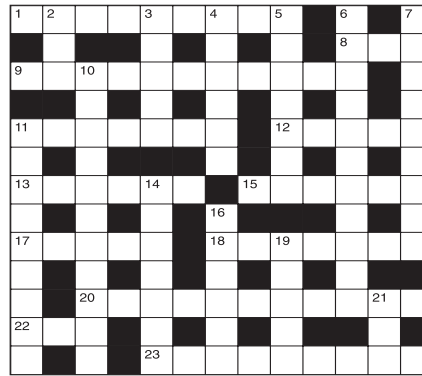
Quick Clues:

Across

1. Controlling device (9)
8. Unity (3)
9. Dejected (11)
11. Anger (7)
12. Fragrance (5)
13. Opportunity (6)
15. Lax (6)
17. Consumed (5)
18. Snare (7)
20. Deceit (11)
22. Woman in religious order (3)
23. Infamy (9)

Down

2. To go off the track produces a bit of hesitation, we hear (3)
3. Publication is associated with ill-use (5)
4. A bird complaint (6)
5. This may cause one to tip up before autumn! (7)
6. Backing for financial authorisation (11)
7. I'm urged to be deeply affected (9)
10. See 1 Across
11. Set up mother with a stage part - a long, rambling piece (9)
14. Delay sentence on an old convict (4-3)
16. A flat metal ring used in the laundry (6)
19. Vexed by one assessment (5)
21. A long time in the Upper Andes (3)

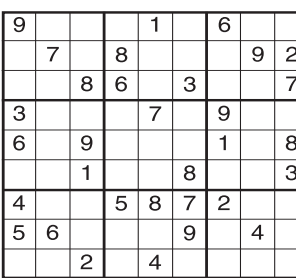


LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Assets; 8 Alight; 10 Neutron; 11 Piece; 12 Work; 13 Bored; 17 Seams; 18 Mean; 22 Moral; 23 Noisome; 24 Second; 25 Planes; Down: 1 Bad news; 2 Estuary; 3 Story; 4 Slipper; 5 Ogres; 6 Other; 9 In command; 14 Telling; 15 Recount; 16 Inverse; 19 Amass; 20 Brace; 21 Wills. QUICK - Across: 7 Amount; 8 Quaint; 10 Monster; 11 Treat; 12 Sled; 13 Antic; 17 Tepid; 18 Dawn; 22 Ideal; 23 Avarice; 24 Assent; 25 Morass. Down: 1 Palmist; 2 Pointer; 3 Unite; 4 Sustain; 5 Liken; 6 State; 9 Principal; 14 Telling; 15 Capital; 16 Intense; 19 Final; 20 Lease; 21 Wagon.

Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

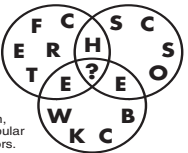
LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:
5 2 1 6 9 7 4 3
7 4 6 2 3 1 5 8 9
3 9 8 5 4 7 1 2 6
2 5 4 3 8 6 7 1 9
1 1 3 7 2 6 8 5 4
6 8 7 4 1 5 9 3 2
3 9 1 3 2 1 4 7 8
4 6 5 9 7 3 2 1 8
1 7 2 8 6 4 3 9 5



Circlegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
The letter represented by the question mark is L.
Carroll, Pullman, Rowling, all popular children's authors.



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NUMBER CRUNCH



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Riverside location for this bungalow



A DECEPTIVELY spacious dormer-style bungalow in a secluded riverside location in Bewdley is on the market priced at £299,500.

Riverside in Acacia Avenue is situated to the south of the town, with accommodation briefly comprising reception hall, lounge with open fireplace, dining kitchen, dressing room/study, ground floor double bedroom, shower room, three first floor double bedrooms and bathroom.

The reception hall is 19ft 4in by 8ft 2in and has a tiled floor with a 29ft conservatory across the rear, while the lounge - 18ft 7in by 13ft 5in - has a feature fireplace.

The modern fitted dining kitchen, 18ft 8in by 11ft 9in, has a range of wall and base cupboards and integrated appliances including fridge, freezer, double oven and grill, five ring gas hob, stainless steel extractor hood above, space for washing machine and tumble dryer, one and a half stainless steel sink unit with mixer tap - plus an excellent dining area.

Study

The side hallway gives access to a dressing room with fitted wardrobes which could be used as a study, with a shower room to bedroom one which was formerly two rooms and measures 18ft 8in by 11ft 5in and has a range of fitted wardrobes. The stairway from the hall leads to a double landing with three double bedrooms and bathroom fitted in white to include a panelled bath with shower over, pedestal wash hand basin and low flush wc.

Outside the award-winning terraced gardens are surrounded by green wrought iron railings and extensively planted with a range of shrubs and seasonal plants.

There are two greenhouses and to the side of the property a covered walkway which leads to a storage shed and pathway leading to two allocated parking spaces at the bottom of Acacia Avenue.

Call Allan Morris & Jones on 01562 747755 for more details or to arrange a viewing of this property.

Call Allan Morris & Jones on 01562 747755 for more details or to arrange a viewing of this dormer-style bungalow in Bewdley

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SPRINGFIELD ROAD, HALESOWEN



Large detached home with private gdns
2 reception rooms & refitted kitchen
L-shaped conservatory & utility & WC
3 double bedrooms & refitted bathroom
35ft tandem garage & blkpvd driveway
UPVC DG & GCH

£265,000 Ref: D726

VILLAGE MEWS, QUINTON



4 bed town house with ensuite & dwc
Lounge/dining room & French doors to garden
Master bedroom with ensuite
Block paved off road parking to front
Benefiting from GCH & UPVC DBG
No upward chain - vacant possession

£189,950 Ref: D1161

APSLEY ROAD, OLDBURY



Extended semi-detached with garage
18ft 10 breakfast kitchen & utility room
Bathroom with shower & bath, 2 WCs
3 good sized bedrooms - no box room
Private rear garden with southerly aspect
UPVC double glazing & gas central heating

£164,950 Ref: D1162

QUINTON LANE, QUINTON



Extended home with driveway to front
Extended kitchen & 2 reception rooms
3 bedrooms & bathroom
Part double glazed & electric heating
Benefits from downstairs WC
Gardens to rear with garage

£155,000 Ref: D1158

PARSONS HILL, OLDBURY



Immaculate 3 bed semi-det home
Refitted kitchen & UPVC conservatory
Lounge & downstairs WC
Refitted bathroom - white suite
Driveway to front - off road parking
Extensive landscaped garden - westerly aspect

£139,950 Ref: D1150

RIDGACRE ROAD, QUINTON



3 bed semi in popular residential area
30ft lounge/dining room & kitchen
3 bedrooms & bathroom on first floor
Front & large enclosed rear garden
UPVC double glazing fascias & soffits
Gas central heating (combi boiler)

£139,950 Ref: D1150

HESKET AVENUE, OLDBURY



Semi-detached home in cul-de-sac
25ft lounge diner, kitchen & utility
3 bedrooms & family bathroom
Front & rear gardens
No upward chain
Gas central heating & part double glazing

£129,950 Ref: D1159

MERTON CLOSE, OLDBURY



Spacious 3 double bed home in cul-de-sac
22ft lounge diner & 12ft kitchen
Upstairs bathroom & downstairs WC
UPVC dg & GCH
Garage & driveway - plenty of parking
Low maintenance & private rear garden

£99,950 Ref: D1152

MALVERN ROAD, OLDBURY



Well proportioned 3 bed mid terrace home
Vacant possession - no upward chain
In need of updating & improvement
Gas central heating - UPVC DBG in part
Lawned gardens to front & rear
Parking to rear

£99,950 Ref: D1149

HAGLEY ROAD WEST, OLDBURY



3 bed in need of modernisation
No upward chain - vacant possession
2 reception rooms & kitchen
3 bedrooms & bathroom
Rear access for vehicles
Gardens to front & rear

£99,950 Ref: D1151

SCRIBBANS CLOSE, SMETHWICK



Spacious 2 storey maisonette with 3 bedrooms
Refitted kitchen with built in oven and hob
4ft 10 x 14ft lounge diner
3 good sized bedrooms & family bathroom
Allocated parking to rear
Gas central heating fitted

£60,000 Ref: D1156

BOWLING GREEN DRIVE, SMETHWICK



Modern 3 bed link detached family home
Superbly presented throughout
Lounge, dining kitchen & DWG
Master bedroom with ensuite facility
2 further bedrooms & family bathroom
UPVC DBG, GCH, gardens & garage

£189,950 Ref: D1137

SHENSTONE VALLEY ROAD, HALESOWEN



Extended semi-detached with garage
18ft 10 breakfast kitchen & utility room
Bathroom with shower & bath, 2 WCs
3 good sized bedrooms - no box room
Private rear garden with southerly aspect
UPVC double glazing & gas central heating

£159,950 Ref: D1066

MONCKTON ROAD, OLDBURY



Semi detached home with garage
Lounge & separate dining room
3 bedrooms, bathroom & WC
Paved driveway giving off road parking
Extensive rear garden
UPVC DG, GCH & security system

£154,950 Ref: D923

BARSTON ROAD, OLDBURY



Extended semi detached 3 bed home
23ft lounge diner & refitted kitchen
Utility/laun room - UPVC & brick construction
Large southerly rear garden with vehicular access
UPVC double glazing & gas central heating
Well presented home - must be viewed

£139,950 Ref: D1096

KENELM COURT, ROMSLEY



Superb 2 bed detached bungalow
Benefitting new DBG & GCH boiler
Refitted kitchen with built in appliances
Lounge/dining rm over looking rear gardens
Off road parking & enclosed rear garden
Internal inspection essential to appreciate property

£164,500 Ref: D1013

FARM AVENUE, OLDBURY



Extended semi detached home
Breakfast kitchen to rear
Two separate reception rooms
Refitted bathroom & three bedrooms
Garage to side & blockpaved driveway
UPVC double glazing & GCH

£159,950 Ref: D873

BADGERS CROFT, HALESOWEN



15ft lounge & 11ft 10 fitted kitchen
Two bedrooms with quality fitted furniture
Refitted shower room with white suite
No upward chain - vacant possession
UPVC double glazing & gas central heating
Lawned & pebbled rear garden with patio

£149,950 Ref: D1129

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OLDBURY, WYVERN CLOSE

Set in a very quiet cul-de-sac is this modern unfurnished detached home, briefly comprising of: Four Bedrooms, Master with En-Suite, Spacious Lounge, Separate Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen with White Goods, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Driveway and Garage Parking, Front Rear Gardens

£775 PCM



HALESOWEN, CHILTON CLOSE

An Extended Four Bedroom Semi-Detached House in this quiet location on the Popular Squirrels Estate, comprising of: Large Living Room, Separate Dining Room, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, New Carpets Throughout, Three Double and One Single Bedroom, Pleasant Rear Garden, Separate Garage En-Bloc, Viewing Essential

£750 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, WOOLPACK CLOSE

An unfurnished detached family home comprising of: Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Family Bathroom, Rear Family Garden, Driveway Parking and Garage.

£650 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, MARY MACARTHUR DRIVE

An unfurnished semi detached house, close to local transport, and shops, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Garage, Cul-de-sac, Parking, Gardens

£625 PCM



HALESOWEN, WILTSHIRE DRIVE

Located on the Homer Hill Estate, is this well present semi-detached home, briefly comprising of: Three Bedrooms with Fitted Wardrobes, Spacious Lounge, Dining Room, Family Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking, Unfurnished

£575 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, HARVEST ROAD

A Well Presented Mid-Terraced House briefly comprising of: Three Double Bedrooms, Spacious Lounge with Separate Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen with White Goods, House Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, On Road Parking, Well Maintained Rear Garden, Close to Schools.

£550 PCM



HALESOWEN, HIGHLAND HOUSE

Located just off Graham Road, is this very large, fully refurbished ground floor Flat, comprising of: Two Large Bedrooms, New Fitted Kitchen, Modern Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Allocated Parking, Garage, Communal Gardens, Unfurnished

£550 PCM



HALESOWEN, ADAMS COURT

An Unfurnished ground floor apartment, Close to local amenities, briefly comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Large Fitted Kitchen, Spacious Lounge, Bathroom with Separate Shower, Parking Space

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, HAMMERSLEY CLOSE

Located in a nice quiet cul-de-sac, is this unfurnished modern mid terraced house, comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Fitted Kitchen, Spacious Lounge, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Driveway for 2 Cars, Rear Garden, Viewing Highly Recommended

£515 PCM



HALESOWEN, HAGLEY ROAD

An unfurnished mid terraced house, briefly comprising of: Two Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Lovely Rear Garden, On Road Parking, Close to Town Centre.

£500 PCM



NETHERTON, PAINT CUP ROW

A refurbished two bedroom detached set in a cul-de-sac location, briefly comprising of: Fitted Kitchen, Lounge, Two Bedrooms, Downstairs Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating and Enclosed Garden, Off Road Parking, Viewing Essential

£495 PCM



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A superb refurbished mid terraced property with walking distance to Old Hill town centre, with an internal inspection recommended, briefly comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Walk in Dressing Room, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen with Appliances and Utility Area, Bathroom with Shower Cubic but NO BATH, Double Glazing, Electric Heating, On Road Parking, Low Maintenance Rear Garden

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This lovely unfurnished modern first floor apartment, located in a popular area, and close to local train station and buses, comprises of: Gas Central Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Parking Space

£485 PCM



TIPTON, FERGUSON DRIVE

A lovely modern first floor apartment, briefly comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Spacious Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower, Electric Storage Heating, Double Glazing, Two Allocated Parking Spaces, Communal Gardens, Internal Viewing Recommended.

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BRIARLEY HILL, DADFORD VIEW

A Delightful Two Bedroom Mews House, Close To Merry Hill Shopping Centre, briefly comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Gas Central Heating, Living Room With New Carpets, Fitted Kitchen With New Floorings, Bathroom With Shower, Driveway Parking

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BRIARLEY HILL, LITTLE JOHN STREET

Located within walking distance to Briarley Hill and Merry Hill, is this unfurnished modern mews house, comprising of: Two Double Bedrooms, Gas Central Heating, Fitted Kitchen, Downstairs WC, Spacious Living Room, Bathroom with Shower, Rear Garden, Off Road Parking for 2 Cars

£450 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, POWKE LANE

A Part furnished apartment close to local amenities, briefly comprising of: Electric Storage Heating, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Living Room, Fitted Dining Kitchen, Double Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Parking

£445 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, LUANNE CLOSE

A well presented ground floor flat, on this popular development, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Double Bedroom with Fitted Wardrobes and Patio Doors onto Balcony, Bathroom with Shower, Communal Garden, Allocated Parking Space, Unfurnished

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A very well presented and close to Colley Lane Primary School, is this furnished to suit ground floor apartment, briefly comprising of: Two Double Bedrooms, Spacious Lounge, Fitted Kitchen with White Goods, Family Bathroom with Shower, Allocated Parking Space.

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BRIARLEY HILL, CHURCH HILL

Located within walking distance to Briarley Hill and Merry Hill, is this modernised second floor apartment, briefly comprising of: Fitted Kitchen, One Double Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Spacious Lounge, Parking Available at Rear

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Bringing show of colour that's right up your street

Forget Coronation Street-style dingy back yards and dark alleyways. The RHS is now calling on communities to put colour into their back street walkways, Hannah Stephenson reports



Haven of colour in an alley – perhaps not what you would expect

Urban alleyways in this country have often been seen as threatening places – dark, lined with brick walls or fences, with no colour and plenty of possibilities for crime.

Yet in certain areas green-fingered residents have made their alleyways a sight to behold, filled with plants which create a riot of colour and a heart-warming atmosphere, as far away from graffiti-land as you can get.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) is now calling on communities to transform unsightly, neglected alleyways into green havens, championing the findings of a recent RHS report that shows the significant impact this sort of revival has on communities.

A survey of 231 gardening groups found neglected areas were often problematic because of crime and fear of crime. Disused alleyways were a particular concern because they're a perfect access route for burglars.

Many councils run schemes to gate off problem alleyways and the impact this has had on crime has been significant in cities like Cardiff, Bristol and Manchester.

According to the RHS report, in one Manchester street, 50 properties backed on to a four-way passage and were prone to burglary. It was gated off and residents planted it up, turning what was once a crime-ridden grot-spot into a flourishing community haven where residents hold events and children play.

Vandalism

"A lot of groups that have renovated disused spaces like alleyways which have been prone to vandalism and antisocial behaviour have reported that vandals sometimes continue but this is extremely short-lived," says Stephanie Eynon, RHS community horticulture manager.

"If they steal planters, do graffiti or whatever, they soon notice that the planters are put back and the graffiti is removed – not by the council, but by residents. These once disused areas become looked-after, used, lived-in, part of the community and vandals are put off by the fact there is a strong community presence.

"Groups report that vandals don't return. Whether it's through fear of being watched, the fact that there are people physically now in these areas is off-putting to them."

The RHS It's Your Neighbourhood campaign, part of Britain in Bloom, is offering advice on planting up neglected spaces like alleyways and also providing information on funding. There are already more than 1,000 registered IYN groups. To set up a new group or join an existing one, go to www.rhs.org.uk/communities

Planting

RHS Young Designer 2011 finalists Owen Morgan and Alexandra Froggatt, who will demonstrate how to regenerate an alleyway through planting at the RHS London Plant and Design Show on February 14 and 15, offer the following tips:

- A derelict alleyway can be taken on as a community project. Even on a shoestring budget, bright colours and simple raised beds can transform an area quickly. Be creative – recycled items will add an interesting dynamic to any design.

- Green walling is an instant effect and can vastly increase your planting options and available area for planting in a limited space. Green wall systems lend themselves to the growing of ferns which are well suited to a damp, shaded alleyway wall. There are plenty of products on the market that utilise pockets or pouches with in-built irrigation systems.

- With green wall technology the potential for vertical allotments is beginning to be realised. An alleyway could be taken on by the community and be transferred into a vertical allotment. In urban areas this would help towards the lack of available allotment space.

- Take into account practical considerations. Speak to neighbours before embarking on any structural work. Take into consideration the Party Wall Act and contact a surveyor if in doubt.

- Most alleyways require some degree of access. A good design should include a clear flat access path wide enough for wheelie bins, disabled access or buggies.

- Many alleyways will have a concrete-lined base and will



A colourful alleyway in Manchester

therefore be unsuitable for conventional planting. Pots, planters and troughs are an ideal way of creating a strong design identity to the space while providing plenty of opportunity for planting.

- Climbers on funky trellis will also add vertical interest. Climbing hydrangeas are self-clinging and highly shade tolerant.

- Use hanging planters to break up long sections of wall.
- The majority of alleyways are shady so experiment with shade tolerant plants such as ferns, hakonechloa and hostas.

- A few large specimens will have strong impact in a small space so add bamboo or hardy palms.

- Box is shade tolerant so try adding some topiary balls or cones for year-round elegance.

- Brighten up dark and dingy areas by adding bold coloured pots. White will act to lift and lighten the area. Paint the walls to make a bold statement, but make sure you have permission first.



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Astley Crescent, Halesowen



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A semi detached property comprising lounge diner, kitchen, dining room, utility room, four bedrooms, bathroom and en-suite shower room. Driveway and rear garden. No upward chain.



MOTORING NEWS AND REVIEWS

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Your essential guide to the world of motoring compiled by Motoring Editor Sharon Walters

Meet the hybrid diesel with plenty of promise

THE CONCEPT of a hybrid vehicle is no longer new. We have Toyota to thank for the broad acceptance of cars that run on electric as well as petrol power. However, it's the choice of engine that has put some people off.

Petrol power is fine if the fuel is cheap. This goes some way to explaining why Toyota – and Honda – hybrids have been so successful in North America.

Sadly our 'special relationship' has yet to extend to convincing our cousins across the water that diesel is better.

And that's why diesel hybrids have been absent from the price lists; the American market is the biggest and the most influential.

That's about to change, however, with the introduction of Peugeot's 3008 Hybrid4.

Based on a standard 3008, Peugeot has connected an electric powertrain to the car's rear wheels.

In an instant you've got an all-wheel

By Iain Dooley

drive family crossover vehicle, but you've also got a car that can travel for a mile or so on electric power alone.

In the right conditions it will also pull away from rest in electric mode, reducing the amount of fuel you use and boosting throttle response.

So how does it all work? In simple terms the 3008 Hybrid4 packs a conventional four-cylinder diesel motor under its bonnet. In this case, it's Peugeot's higher-output 163 horsepower unit.

At the back is the aforementioned electric motor arrangement. This motor can deliver up to the equivalent of 37 horsepower.

The battery pack is automatically charged without the need to plug it in somewhere like with a conventional electric vehicle.

The regenerative process happens when you're off the throttle, and is most obvious from the stronger than usual engine braking – around town it's noticeable that

you need to use the brakes less when coasting to a stop. The two power units' connection with the real world is by Peugeot's clutchless manual gearbox.

This will be a familiar unit to Peugeot fans and, while it does have its quirks, with the addition of electric power the automated gear changes feel smoother than in a conventional car.

Out on the road, the 3008 Hybrid4 behaves almost like a regular 3008.

The immediate tell-tale sign is when you turn the key, as not much happens in the noise department.

Whine

With the default start-up mode electric, it's possible to pull away with just the distant whine of the electric motor.

If the car detects more power is required, the diesel engine fires into life.

From then on, it's just like driving a diesel-powered 3008, that is until you stop as that's when the engine stops.

Move off and, if there's enough battery charge, you'll power away in electric mode and start the automatic power-juggling cycle again. If there's one thing the hybrid variant does share with its conventional

3008 cousin, it's a rotary controller allowing you to change transmission modes.

To counter the need for a genuinely costly all-wheel drive system, Peugeot adopted a traction control system dubbed Grip Control. The Hybrid4 model goes a step further; you can switch between all electric (EV), power, auto and 4x4 modes.

Of course, 'forcing' the car into EV mode will only last for as long as there's sufficient charge in the battery, which means driving gently to achieve the 'couple of miles' goal.

The flipside is the power mode, which unleashes everything the 3008 has for maximum acceleration and performance, while the 4x4 mode engages the rear axle for added traction on slippery grass and muddy tracks.

Predictably, leaving the car in the auto mode seems to work well during general driving duties.

The technical competence demonstrated by the 3008 Hybrid4 is but one element of its appeal.

Peugeot readily admits that its focus is on

company car drivers as, with the base specification car outputting 99g/km CO₂, the tax benefits will be attractive. Also, there's the ability to offset the full cost of the car against company profits in the first year of ownership.

Not bad for a five-seat, 200 horsepower high-rise hatchback with the same kit as a regular 3008 plus Peugeot's recently improved build quality and premium cabin ambience.



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MOTABILITY, the leading car scheme for disabled people, has a great range of 2,000 cars in its current 2012 price list.

Disabled motorists can now choose from over 300 cars at no Advance Payment, meaning there's no upfront additional cost when leasing a reliable new car through Motability.

The iconic MINI 1.6 One, compact Toyota Yaris 1.33VVT-I TR and nippy Kia Venga 1.6 2 are all currently available with no Advance Payment.

While for those that require more room, larger vehicles such as the spacious Chevrolet Cruze 1.6 LT, the popular Vauxhall Astra 1.6 Exclusiv and the stylish Ford Focus 1.6 125 Zetec are also all available with no Advance Payment.

Anyone who receives the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance or the War

Pensioners' Mobility Supplement can simply exchange this weekly payment – currently around £50 a week – for a new car through Motability. Insurance, servicing, RAC breakdown assistance and replacement tyres are also included.

Other vehicles available with no Advance Payment include the punchy Peugeot 308 HDi 92 Active and the reliable Hyundai i20 1.4 CRDi Comfort.

A wide range of greener vehicles with emissions of 120 grams of CO2 per km or less, are available including the sporty SEAT Leon 1.6TDI Ecomotive S Cupa and the economical SKODA Fabia 1.2TDI GreenLine II. Both are available with no Advance Payment.

Mike Betts, chief executive, Motability Operations explains: "This is our first Price Guide following the streamlining of the Scheme's range which was announced in October 2011. Despite the reduction in the size of the list, the most popular cars chosen by Motability

customers, including automatics, estates and diesels continue to be available and there are hundreds of cars that have no Advance Payment."

From now, the core range of vehicles from Motability all have an Advance Payment of £2,000 or below, together with diesel, estate and automatic versions of those models.

This means that the most popular cars continue to be offered, such as the "WHATCAR? of the Year 2011" – the Audi A1 1.2TFSI SE – available at £199 Advance Payment.

Other models, such as the popular Volkswagen Golf 1.2TSi 105 S, with air conditioning, and the spacious Honda New Civic 1.4i-VTEC SE are both available at £299 Advance Payment.

● For more information visit the car search tool at motability.co.uk or call 0800 093 1000.

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Here's the first glimpse of the new Vauxhall Astra VXR



The new Vauxhall Astra VXR, which is based on the GTC, will go on display at the Geneva Motor Show

INITIAL details of the next Vauxhall Astra VXR have been released, including power outputs, top speed and equipment.

The car will be based on the Astra GTC, which has already acquired a fine reputation for handling.

Powered by a 276bhp 2.0-litre engine that also pushes out 295lb/ft of torque, its top speed is

155mph – although it's not yet known whether this is organic or limited.

It will feature a mechanical limited-slip differential in conjunction with Vauxhall's HiPerStrut (High Performance Strut) suspension system to create massive cornering grip, and it's safe to assume an attempt will be made on the front-wheel-drive Nurburgring lap record in due course. Also standard will be the FlexRide adap-

tive suspension system, which incorporates Sport and VXR buttons in order to offer two different stages of harder, more aggressive damping, steering and throttle response settings.

Two exhausts and a swooping boot spoiler give identity to the rear end, while a revised grille is more aggressive at the front. The Astra VXR will go on display at the Geneva Motor Show, which opens to the press on March 6.

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FORD FIESTA 1.3 Flight, 2001, 51,200 miles, silver, abs, a/b, fsh, MoT tax, pas, s/r stereo CD £300 ono 07928 186250.

FORD KA 02 reg, silver, four months MoT, good condition inside and out, pas, CD, £1,100. 07932 085609.

FORD KA, W reg, black, pas, 01995, 35,000 miles, previous lady owners, 2 months tax, 3 months MoT, £995. 07823 306947.

HYUNDAI GETZ 1.1, 32 plate, 2002, full MoT, low mileage, 3-dr, £1,095 o.n.o. 07531 199968.

NISSAN MICRA 1.0 P reg, 3dr, long MoT/tax, very clean throughout, reliable, CD, economical, £450 ono. 07504 214469.

PEUGEOT 206 1.4, 1999, black, 110,000 miles, full MoT and Tax. Very clean. £595. 07970 087743.

RENAULT CLIO 1.2 Expression, 2003, black, 112 months MoT, very good condition, low tax, £1,395 ono. 07497 07311 964296.

RENAULT MEGANE SCENIC 1.4, W reg, full MoT, low mileage, very reliable, red, £895 o.n.o. 07531 199968.

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SEAT ESTATE, 1998, 1.9 Diesel, 160,000 miles, Red, MoT July, Tax August, £500. 07843 136785.

VAUXHALL ASTRA CLUB Silver, W reg (2000), 1 Dec, 5-dr hatchback, 53k mileage, 5 months MoT, 11 months Tax, 2 registered owners. Excellent condition. £950. Telephone 01902 820973.

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VW PASSAT, 02 reg, 102k miles, grey, 2.0 petrol, good interior, part s/h, £575 ono. 07860 859241.

VW PASSAT DIESEL TDI X Reg., 2001, SH, very good condition, £1,200 ono. 01902 636118 / 07956 370580.

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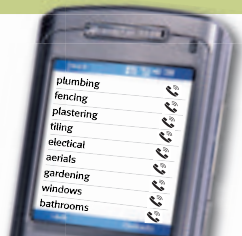
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SPORT

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Leah hits four in defeat of Hawks

Girls League

Halas Hawks U14 2 Hasbury 4
HANNAH and Georgia Spencer made a winning start with Hasbury as Leah George scored all four goals.

A depleted Halas opened the scoring through Amy Blakemore and Hasbury equalised when George collected a pass from Becky Hurley to finish.

In the second half, George put Hasbury in front and then completed her hat-trick from close range. She then went on to notch a fourth before Sophie Pritchard hit Halas's second.

Halas Hawks U16 4

Wordsley Wasps 0

Halas went ahead after 15 minutes through Kelly Gorman, then seemed to take their foot off the gas.

But as the game moved towards half-time, Kate Drew scored a cracker that went in off the post. The second half saw Gorman score again before Liz McAlenon got the fourth.

Women

Halas Hawks 1 Redditch 3

Halas Ladies took on Premier opponents Redditch in the Open Cup and it was the visitors who scored first only for Tash Berry to glance in a near-post header for the equaliser.

With no further score the game went into extra time, which saw Redditch score twice to go through to the semi-final.

Boys League

Halas Hawks U9 West 2

Penn Colts West 4

The under-nines' winless streak continues but they produced a good performance against Penn Colts.

Halas scored through Anthony Andreou and Robert Pilling.

Halas Hawks U13 0

Dudley Juniors 5

The under-13s started well and for the first quarter of the game more than matched a Dudley side challenging for top spot.

But Dudley then stamped their authority on the game.

West Hagley 0

Halas Hawks U16 14

This was a commanding performance with hat-tricks for Lee Mills and Steve Barratt, two apiece for Josh Cater and Jake Mace and a goal each for Alex Giles, Jamie Nicholls, Matt Graizer and Danny Hodges.

Halas Hawks U18 2

West Hagley 0

The under-18s dominated this Stourbridge League Cup game and won with goals from Drew Jones and Anthony Keeling.

Shoot-out agony for battling Old Hales

Old Halesonians 4 Shrewsbury 4

(Shrews win 4-3 on penalty strokes)

OLD HALESONIANS Mixed XI went out of the England Hockey Mixed Trophy in the first round after losing a penalty shoot-out.

The home team worked hard both on and off the pitch, clearing the surface of overnight snow to ensure Sunday's game could go ahead.

The game started with good passages of play from both sides, who were showcasing the best of their men's and ladies' teams. Hales soon took the lead in sublime fashion. Striker Jim Gurmin

received the ball at the top of the D, under pressure from the diving Shrewsbury keeper whom he lobbed to make it 1-0.

At half-time captain Paul Woodall substituted himself which left the home side vulnerable in defence. Shrewsbury capitalised with three quick goals, one of them after an error by goalkeeper James Jones. He misjudged a through ball from Shrewsbury which rebounded off the post, leaving the visiting striker with an easy tap-in.

The home side then faced a

mountain to climb. Hales' Stacey Twist cut the deficit when her wonder strike made it 3-2.

Hales then equalised when the umpire awarded the home side a penalty stroke.

Chris Whitley duly stepped up and powered the shot into the top corner.

The game was turning into a thriller, and with both teams tiring chances were coming quick and often for both sides. Shrewsbury took the lead again with 10 minutes remaining, when the

Hales defence were left outnumbered. Two minutes later Gurmin grabbed his second of the game to leave the sides all-square.

With both teams in high spirits, the thrilling fixture would be decided through the cruel lottery of penalty strokes.

In the best of five penalty strokes, both teams scored their first three, with Paul Woodall, Laura Underhill and Doug Houghton all finding the net for the home side.

Twist then had her effort saved, but Hales keeper Jones was able to save the next Shrewsbury effort.

At 3-3 after four strokes, Whitley stepped up to take Hales' final penalty.

After dispatching his earlier penalty stroke so confidently, it seemed certain that his effort would find the net.

However, Whitley flicked the ball high over the goal to go from hero to villain.

Shrewsbury then scored their final penalty stroke to bring the game to an end.

Old Hales performed excellently and were gracious in defeat, part of a great spectacle for England Hockey.

Curzon's penalty corner cracker

Old Halesonians 1 Finchfield 1

OLD Hales firsts suffered another disappointing result after a last-minute equaliser from Finchfield.

The home side, who have been lacking confidence in recent weeks, found their way in front shortly into the second half when Mark Curzon found the net from a penalty corner.

Soon after, Tom Bulteel was yellow-carded for failing to retreat five metres from a Finchfield free-hit.

Hales held out until the dying moments when Finchfield scored from a similar penalty corner routine.

Old Halesonians Ladies 3

Worcester 0

Old Hales Ladies beat bottom team Worcester with a well-drilled team performance. Bianca Homer hit an excellent hat-trick to keep up the promotion fight.

Worcester 0 Old Halesonians 1

Old Hales seconds faced their hardest challenge at top club Worcester, who dominated the first half but struggled to break through.

Late in the second half, Hales sensed a hard fought away win, and when the ball broke to makeshift forward Jake Brooke, his reverse aerial was controlled and finished fantastically by debutant James Bayley.

Shrewsbury 7

Old Halesonians 0

Missing several regular players, Hales struggled against an exceptionally strong Shrewsbury side.

Old Halesonians 8 Stratford 0

Old Hales thirds hammered their nearest promotion rivals, avenging an earlier defeat at Stratford.

It took Adam Hill only 11 minutes into his return to score after some excellent play by Matt Harrold.

From then on there was only one team in it, as Harrold completed a hat-trick of assists by setting up Steve Butler and Charles Palmer to put Old Hales 3-0 up.

Palmer grabbed a second and then Hales scored their fifth just before half time, with some precise finishing from Steve Butler. Damien Shackleton and Hill made it 7-0 before Palmer completed his hat-trick.

Old Wulfs 0 Old Halesonians 9

Old Hales fourths stormed to victory against an Old Wulfrunians side that have yet to score a point this season.

A great team effort led Hales to dominate the fixture and display their talents.

Happy New Year at last as Veltz win first point

DEPLETED Halesowen gave their supporters something to cheer on Saturday with their first point of 2012.

The Evo-Stik South Division One stalemate was their first ever visit to Thatcham's Waterside Park.

The visitors were still carrying suspensions after a long lay-off due to bad weather but made a good start and saw a second-minute deflected shot from Neil Barnfield collected by Thatcham keeper Paul Strudley.

The Kingfishers forced the first corner of the game in the fifth minute and Carl Self screwed a shot wide.

Fluent play proved difficult on the sticky playing surface, but Self's 26th-minute overhead kick forced Veltz goalkeeper Paul Evans to back-pedal and produce the best save of the game by tipping the ball over his crossbar.

Promising

Marcus Jackson then marked his Halesowen debut with a dangerous cross that was saved by Strudley two minutes later.

Just before the interval Nathan Jones glanced a header wide from a Nathaniel Caines cross.

Otherwise the first half proved uneventful with tentative Thatcham without a win in 10 league games and Halesowen nursing a run of six straight defeats.

Good chances remained at a premium although Halesowen's Ben Hasley shot at Strudley from the edge of the penalty area in the 51st minute and Paul Taplin screwed a cross wide for the hosts following a promising

Thatcham 0
Halesowen T 0

build-up on the hour mark.

Visiting goalkeeper Evans then gathered long-range efforts low down from Self and James Clark.

The Veltz began to look more likely to snatch a winner and defender Mark Smith found space in the Thatcham penalty area but volleyed just wide in the 72nd minute.

Two minutes later Strudley saved from Brendan Kelly at close range after a flick-on by Naveed Arshad.

Good defending in the dying minutes helped Halesowen to keep a clean sheet as Evans saved from Mark James in front of goal in the 82nd minute and a further effort from Mark Hughes was scrambled clear.

Thatcham Town: Strudley; Hughes, Pegg, James, Thomas (c), Milledrew (Kingston 80), Clark, Pegg, Davies, Self, Taplin (Johnson 59).

Unused subs: Britt, Sadler.
Halesowen Town: Evans; Loney, Kelly (c), Huckfield, Smith, Barnfield, M. Jackson, N. Jackson (Folkes 90), Jones (Arshad 59), Hasley, Caines (Cottrell 76). **Unused sub:** Flower.
Attendance: 115.

King aims to reign supreme with rebuilt Mini



Clive King with the new car. Inset, King and co-driver Bob Ward with the Mini they crashed in a Welsh ravine

RALLY DUO Clive King and Bob Ward hope their 21st season together will bring them the key to success in their latest restored car.

Woodseton's King and Oldbury's Ward are gearing up for the Sunseeker Rally in Bournemouth this weekend, the opening round of the British Rally championship. They hope to add their

success in the Historic Challenge category, for cars of the 1960 and 70s, having rebuilt a different version of the Mini. King brought the Cooper S back to life with a painstaking restoration in the garage at his home after their last Mini was written off.

He said: "I heard about it on the grapevine some time ago, but it was

only three months ago that I actually found the car.

"I bought it in a bit of a rush, as the previous Mini suffered an enormous amount of body damage on an event in north Wales.

"We slipped off a forest road and dropped 100ft, end over end, down into a ravine."

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Rally pair's hopes
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On the rack
Shoot-out agony
for hockey team
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e-mail: chronsport@expressandstar.co.uk

Swimmers on form to grab two final slots

HALESOWEN Swimming Club's A team took the honours in the second round of the Worcester Winter League.

In their home pool, they finished top by 18 points while the B side came third at Bromsgrove.

The A team were in fierce competition for the lead with Redditch throughout while the B side eventually beat off Stourbridge to take third. The results now mean that both teams will be in the A finals in April.

Double event winners were India Hanke in the freestyle and breaststroke, Jack Simpson and Chloe Robbins in the freestyle and backstroke, Chloe Finch and James Benson in the butterfly and freestyle and Jacob Darby in the butterfly and breaststroke.

Other individual winners were Lillian Parsons and Sophie Page in freestyle, Sam Bradley-Wood in backstroke, Lauren Hill and Ben Meakin in butterfly and Josh Bradley and Connor Oates in breaststroke.

The swimmers in the A Team relays won all their events and included Katy Morrice, James Cuthbert, Imogen Davies, Sarah Turton, Ryan Davies, Joe Coxon, Rebecca Spoor, Richard Phillips, Zachariah Collins, Emma Parsons, Molly Kelly and Mark Laing.

Halesowen gala: Halesowen A 22pts, Redditch 205, Perry Beeches & SSS 128, Droitwich 123, Orion 118.

Bromsgrove gala: Worcester A 21pts, Stourbridge A 207, Halesowen B 145, Stourbridge B 136, Bromsgrove 98.

Barker fit and ready for action

BIRMINGHAM speedway star Ben Barker has declared himself fit for the new season. The Selco Brummies favourite spent Christmas in hospital with a complicated leg injury.

But he is ready for action and will ride alongside Perry Barr team-mate Martin Smolinski in Sunday's Telford Ice meetings.

Barker said: "We're ready to rock and roll, I feel great and I just can't wait to get back on the bike."

"I always had time on my side and about a month ago I started walking normally again which gave me hope."

"But I quickly went from being 50/50 for Telford to being very confident and now, leading up to the event, I'm buzzing about it."

I'm a believer says Heathens' Byron

by Nigel Pearson

DUDLEY HEATHENS new-boy Byron Bekker is predicting a big season for the speedway club.

The South African star flies back into the UK next week to step up preparations for his first season with the former Cradley outfit.

And he says the team assembled by club bosses has the appearance of a title-challenging side.

"I think we've got a good chance of winning something this season," he said.

"We look really solid from top to bottom and we have that strength in depth which is great. The fans are desperate for us to do well and we know there will be some pressure on us but I feel certain the team has what it takes to be strong and competitive."

"You can't make any predictions at this stage because anything can happen in this sport. But there is certainly plenty of cause to be optimistic."

And Bekker is relishing the prospect of returning to the UK from his Johannesburg base.

He said: "I just can't wait to get back over to the UK, I can't remember the last time I felt this excited about a new season."

"I've been training hard physically to ensure I'm fully fit for the new season, my injury set me back last season and I want to be as strong as possible this time."

"I've been on a bike a couple of times over here but when I get back over to the UK I will try and get some laps in at Scunthorpe."

The Heathens open with tough home and away challenge matches against Stoke before defending their National League Shield over two legs in a classic match-up with Mildenhall. Dudley stage the prestigious British Under-21 championship at Monmore Green on April 24 while the other obvious highlight will be the Golden Hammer individual contest on July 10.

In between those two dates the focus will be on the Knockout Cup – and a revenge bid against Buxton, who beat them in that competition and the play-offs.

Fixtures (National League unless stated)

April: 3 Stoke, Ch (Home); 8 Mildenhall, NL Shield (Away), 14 Stoke, Ch (A), 17 Mildenhall, NL Shield (H), 24 British Under-21 Final (H).

May: 5 Rye House (A), 6 Buxton, NL Knockout Cup (A), 8 Buxton, NL Knockout Cup (H), 16 King's Lynn (A), 22 King's Lynn (H), 29 Scunthorpe (H).

June: 3 Buxton (A), 8 Scunthorpe (A), 12 Isle of Wight (H), 23 Stoke (A), 26 Buxton (H).

July: 3 Isle of Wight (A), 10 Golden Hammer Individual, 17 Reserved (H).

August: 7 Stoke (H), 19 Mildenhall (A), 21 Mildenhall (H), 28 Rye House (H).

September: 4 Reserved (H).

Didcot Town 0 Halesowen Town 2

HALESOWEN bounced back for their first win in 2012 with a goal in each half securing a well deserved victory at Didcot.

Ben Haseley headed Halesowen into a sixth-minute lead on Tuesday after busy Marcus Jackson latched on to goalkeeper Jon Henly's weak punch and swung over a right-wing cross.

With the Yeltz in control, Haseley worked free again but Henly turned the ball away and defender Richard Huckfield nodded a Nat Caines corner just wide.

Reserve Yeltz keeper Simon Flower was barely troubled all evening, but tipped a cross from Steve Davis over the bar midway through the first half.

Opening

Dangerman Haseley burst clear again in the 31st minute to smash into the side netting and Nathan Jones then crossed for Haseley to flash another header just wide at the end of an encouraging first half.

Halesowen almost increased the lead just two minutes into the second half but Henly clawed Haseley's header away. Haseley then did exceptionally well to carve himself a 52nd-minute opening only for Henly to make another good block.

Mark Smith doubled Halesowen's lead by glancing home a 60th-minute header from another Caines corner.

The Railwaymen showed no sign of finding a way back and Brendan Kelly almost found a third Halesowen goal with a fiercely struck 71st-minute direct free-kick but was thwarted by a splendid Henly save.

But the Yeltz had already done enough to claim their first double of the season.

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